

# Missouri Western

The magazine of Missouri Western State University | Spring 2017



Campus events for the community, p.16



# Most spirited classrooms rock

The Public Relations and Marketing Office held a Most Spirited Classroom contest last fall for elementary school classrooms, and the winning classes received a pizza party with Max. Winners included the following teachers and their classes: Tish Gerling '16, Hosea fourth-grade; Rachel McIntosh '09, St. Francis Xavier third-grade; Melissa Schubert '05, Lake Contrary first-grade; Jamie Stuck '03, Amazonia fourth-grade; and three North Platte second-grade classes taught by Jamie Barnard '03, Erica Newsome '04 and Tracy Verduzco.



## | President's Perspective |

Dear Friends,

As you may know, state allocations for all public colleges and universities in the state have been faced with funding withholds for fiscal year 2017. I wanted to take this opportunity to keep our alumni and friends informed about what that means for Missouri Western.

First and foremost, I want to note that Missouri Western's top priorities remain our students and our employees. As we carefully review our options, we will do so with that goal in mind.

The state allocation withholds for the fiscal year ending June 30, 2017 were effective immediately. As this was a midyear cut we had not anticipated, we had to find ways to quickly cover the anticipated budget reduction. This included an immediate reduction in operating and travel budgets across the board by 3 percent. The University also suspended its summer theatre program, Western Playhouse, and its debate program.

In addition to the current fiscal year cuts, the state's proposed FY18 budget by Gov. Greitens includes cutting \$2.09 million (9 percent) from Missouri Western's state appropriation.



When this issue went to press in April, the General Assembly had not yet voted on a final version of the FY18 budget, so that amount may change.

In the meantime, however, it was important that we plan for a reduced appropriation from the state for the coming year. To review and identify cost savings

measures, we have created a budget advisory council that will continue to review all of our options.

Please note that the University's cash position is such that we do not anticipate having any issues covering our expenses. Our reserves, when combined with our cost-saving measures, will help us weather this withhold and any cuts to our appropriation in the coming fiscal year.

As you can imagine, monetary gifts to Missouri Western have become more important than ever. We truly appreciate your support of this University and its students.

Sincerely,

*Robert A. Vartabedian*

Robert A. Vartabedian  
President  
Missouri Western State University



| **ON THE COVER** |

Missouri Western's events and speakers enhance the quality of life in the community. Events clockwise from top left: Holi Festival, Griffon volleyball, Nikki Giovanni, Tom Ridge, Haskell Dancers, Madrigal Feaste, Cokie Roberts, and "The 25th Annual Putnam County Spelling Bee." Center, the International Fair. Cover design by Raghavendra Kotakonda.

**SECTIONS**

- 3 **Campus News**
- 12 **Sports**
- 22 **Alumni News**
- 24 **Alumnotes and Alumni Profiles**



16



12

**FEATURES**

8 **Yes, You Can – the BGS Degree**

Thanks to the Bachelor of General Studies degree, many students are now alumni. Read about three who are pleased with the program and proud of their accomplishments.

16 **Town and Gown: Community Enjoys Campus Events**

A look back at the past year proves that Missouri Western serves as a good community partner by providing a host of activities and events for the public.



29

*The Missouri Western Magazine is a publication of the University Advancement Office for alumni and friends of Missouri Western State University and its predecessor institutions.*

**SPRING 2017  
VOLUME 15  
NUMBER 2**

**EDITOR**

Diane Holtz

**DESIGN EDITOR**

Kendy Scudder '94

**DIRECTOR OF PUBLIC RELATIONS & MARKETING**

Jamel Nichols

**DIRECTOR OF ALUMNI RELATIONS**

Colleen Kowich

**PHOTOGRAPHERS**

Rachael Bergeron

Aubry Carpenter '14

John Ellis

Gillian Evans

Karthek Gaddameedi

Raghavendra Kotakonda

Alicia Otto

**BOARD OF GOVERNORS**

Greg Mason '89, Chair

David Liechti, Vice Chair

Al Purcell, Deborah Smith '79, Joseph Kellogg, Student Governor.

**ALUMNI BOARD**

Mary Vaughan '79, President

Natalie Redmond '00, First Vice President

Jim Jeffers '73, Second Vice President

Angie Springs '02, Immediate Past President

Marilyn Beck '77, Joe Byer '11, Shelby Coxon '99, Linda Crabtree '60, Jodi Deering '01, Diane Hook '90, Bob Hughs '06, Lai-Monté Hunter '99, Claudia James '89, Linda Kerner '73, Kendell Misemer '82, Phyllis Myers '56, Molly Pierce '77, James Sanders '84, Ralph Schank '82, David Slater '83, Jennifer Stanek '99, Larry Stobbs '74, Joseph Vigliaturo '75, Lilia White '12, Tona Williams '00, Mary Workman '76 and Reyhan Wilkinson, student representative.

**FOUNDATION BOARD**

Seth Wright, Chair

Dennis Rosonke, Vice Chair

Bill Grimwood, Treasurer

Diane Hook '90, Secretary

Ashley Albers, Mike Basch, Kit Bradley Bowlin, Jared Brooner, Eric Bruder '93, Susan Campbell '01, Ali Carolus, Wayne Chatham '90, Jason Grayson '98, Ed Haffey '62, Jason Horn '95, Steve Johnston, Rodger Karn '98, Jennifer Kneib-Dixon '89, Chris Looney, Michael Pankau '84, Susan Pettigrew '83, Jerry Pickman '85, executive director; Brent Porlier '82; Al Purcell; Tom Richmond; David Shinneman; Tom Tewell; Robert Vartabedian, Missouri Western president; Greg VerMum '89; John Wilson, Julie Woods '96 and Zack Workman '74.

**MISSOURI WESTERN MAGAZINE**

4525 Downs Drive, Spratt Hall 108

St. Joseph, MO 64507

(816) 271-5651

holtz@missouriwestern.edu

missouriwestern.edu/magazine

*Missouri Western State University is an equal opportunity institution.*

## Manufacturing associate degree options approved

Missouri Western will begin offering two options in the Associate of Applied Science degree in Manufacturing Engineering Technology this fall.

The University worked collaboratively with workforce development groups in the region, including the Chamber of Commerce Manufacturing Council and Workforce Development Committee and the Engineering Technology program's Industrial Advisory Board. Feedback from these groups identified a workforce demand for mid-level technicians in the region's growing advanced manufacturing economy, and two options emerged: Precision Machining and Instrumentation and Automation.

The Precision Machining option centers on hands-on learning in machine tool and computer numeric controlled labs and will prepare workforce-ready two-year graduates. The Instrumentation and Automation option focuses on hands-on learning in electricity, electronics and computer applications in industries and will meet the business and industrial trend of the ever-growing electronics and automation applications in production.

Missouri Western also worked with Hillyard Vocational-Technical School in St. Joseph, Missouri, to design an articulation plan that will award course credit and accelerate completion for Hillyard graduates who enter the Missouri Western A.A.S. MET program. The University currently offers an A.A.S. in Manufacturing Engineering Technology and a B.S. in Manufacturing Engineering Technology. ■



### | *Super Science Saturday* |

Almost 1,700 attended the annual and always popular Super Science Saturday, held in Agenstein and Remington halls. Several faculty from academic departments participated with a variety of activities, including Dr. Ben Caldwell, Dr. Natalie Mikita and Dr. Gary Clapp, who put on chemistry shows throughout the day.

### | *Alumna Entrepreneur* |

Alumna entrepreneur Stephanie Tripp '12, owner of Auntie Anne's Pretzels, prepares to cut the ribbon for her store in the East Hills Mall in St. Joseph, Missouri. The store opened in November 2016, and the ribbon cutting was held in January. Left of Tripp is Dr. Mike Lane, dean of the Craig School of Business. Tripp is also pictured with Kelley Tripp, who works in the pretzel bakery, and Annette Weeks '87, director of the Craig School of Business's Center for Entrepreneurship. Behind Stephanie and Kelley are David Bradley and Steve Craig. The two were special guests at the ribbon cutting because of the role they played in helping Stephanie earn the opportunity for the franchise and helping fund it. More than 200 free pretzels were given away at the ribbon cutting.





# Marissa Klingseis: Champion weightlifter

The surge in popularity of CrossFit, a high-intensity fitness program, has brought a renewal of interest in weightlifting, and it is becoming more and more popular for both women and men. But for Marissa Klingseis, a senior biology student, weightlifting has been part of her life since she was in third grade.

Not only is she a committed weightlifter, usually working out twice a day, but she has competed all over the world with USA Weightlifting. Klingseis has set her sights on qualifying for the 2020 Summer Olympics in Tokyo.

If you know her, you know that her goal is not farfetched, but quite attainable. For the 2016 Summer Olympics in Rio de Janeiro, she qualified as an alternate in her category – three were selected, and Klingseis placed fifth. Additionally, last fall, she placed second in the International University Sports Federation World University Championships. The event was held in Mexico, and first- and third-place winners were from Mexico, and fourth-, fifth- and sixth-places were from Great Britain, Japan and Poland.

The St. Joseph, Missouri native, who will graduate this month and is planning to attend medical school, says she continues lifting because she loves challenging herself every day. “You’re always trying to improve, because you can never be perfect.”

Her competitive weightlifting events are the snatch and the clean-and-jerk, and in Mexico, for both events, she lifted a total of 249 kilos (547.8 pounds!). The snatch was 107 kilos (235.4 lbs.) and the clean-and-jerk was 142 kilos (312.4 lbs.). The clean-and-jerk and the snatch are both Olympic lifts, and have been described as difficult movements.

Klingseis began lifting under the tutelage of John Carr, who had begun the weightlifting program at InterServ’s Wesley Center, St. Joseph, in 1978. After elementary school, she began lifting at the Wesley Center and today is guided by Dennis Snethen ’82, director of Youth Services at InterServ.

“It’s my second home,” she says with a smile.

Since Klingseis began competing, she has traveled all over the world, including Poland, Russia, Slovakia, Chile, Peru and Colombia. All her travel expenses are paid for by USA

Weightlifting. She broke an American lifting record as a youth and hopes to break one as an adult.

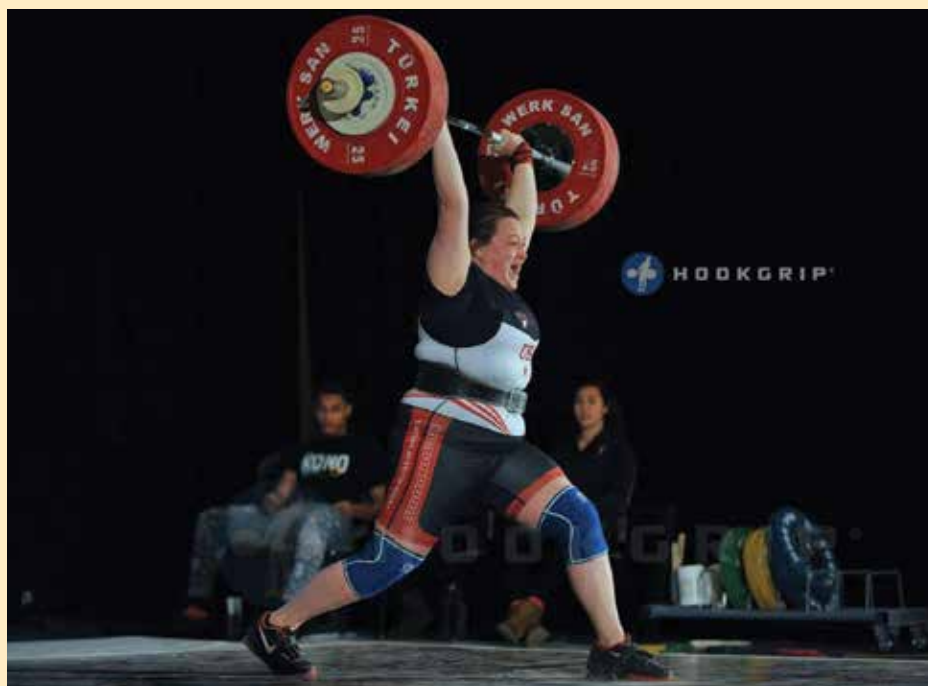
In 2017, Klingseis plans to compete in three meets – one in Chicago, one in Miami, and one in Anaheim, California.

“I love the feel of competing. I’m always nervous. But the second I grab the bar and warm up, I feel like everything will be alright, and all my work will pay off.”

She says she’d love to become a weightlifting coach someday, too, and isn’t really sure how long she’ll continue with competitive lifting. “I’ll see what happens in 2020.” ■

## MARISSA KLINGSEIS’S ACHIEVEMENTS

**Youth American Record Holder**  
**2013 Junior World Bronze Medalist**  
**3-time Junior Pan American Champion**  
**2016 Senior National Champion**  
**4-time American Open Champion**  
**11-time AAU Junior Olympics Champion**  
**2016 World University’s Silver Medalist**  
**2016 Pan American Bronze Medalist**



# Fall Commencement iced

An ice storm last December left travelers stranded on Interstate 29 for up to 10 hours, caused numerous accidents and led to several activities



cancelled for the weekend of Dec. 17 and 18. One of those cancelled activities was Missouri Western’s fall Commencement, which was rescheduled for Tuesday, Dec. 20. No one could remember a time that a commencement had to be postponed due to weather (the December ceremony was added in 1998), so the fall 2016 ceremony may hold that distinction.

Two ceremonies were held the following Tuesday, Dec. 20, in the Fulkerson Center. Approximately 90 students walked in the 11 a.m. ceremony and 115 at 7 p.m., out



of 276 who had planned to walk on Dec. 17. Graduates were also given the opportunity to walk at the spring ceremony this month. ■

## Oversight

Included with the Winter 2017 magazine was a special publication, “What’s in a Name?” In that issue, we inadvertently left out our named campus streets and three named programs.

**Streets on campus** – Our main drive around campus, Downs Drive, is named for State Sen. John Downs ’35; and the street between Mitchell Ave. and Downs Drive at the main entrance is Ronald Reed Jr. Way, named for State Rep. Ronald Reed, Jr. Both Rep. Reed and Sen. Downs played significant roles in the acquisition of the current campus property and the University’s becoming a four-year college.

The street between Downs Drive and the campus’s north entrance on Faraon Street is named James McCarthy Drive in honor of Dr. James McCarthy, Missouri Western’s executive vice president from 1983 to 2001. Dr. McCarthy also served as interim president when Dr. Janet Murphy McCarthy retired in June 2000 until Dr. James Scanlon began his duties in February 2001.

The street in front of the stadium is named Charlie Burri Drive in honor of Charlie Burri ’55, Missouri Western’s first athletic director. Along with inaugurating a football team in 1969, he started many other Missouri Western sports and the Gold Coat Club, and was one of the founders of the college’s first athletic conference.

**Programs** – The Barbara Sprong Leadership Challenge began in 1992 and was named for Barbara Sprong, who served as president of the Board of Regents and was an avid community volunteer.

The R. Dan Boulware Convocation on Critical Issues began in 1993 and was named in honor of R. Dan Boulware, who had served as president of the Board of Regents. Boulware also served as the chair of Missouri Western’s capital campaign in 1989 and is co-chair for the Centennial Capital Campaign that began in 2015.

The Helene Droher Business Development Program was established in memory of Droher by her daughter, Carole Tuttle ’52, in 2003. The program is in the Craig School of Business.

We apologize for the oversight. ■



R. Dan Boulware



Charlie Burri '55



Sen. John Downs '35



Dr. James McCarthy



Rep. Ronald Reed Jr.



Barbara Sprong



## Campus Kudos

- Five alumni of the Craig School of Business's Applied Entrepreneurship program received five out of 11 awards at the 2016 Rocky Mountain Chocolate Factory convention last fall:
  - Seeley Award: **Cassandra Cyril '07**, Laughlin, Nevada; the Seeley Award is awarded to the store that demonstrates consistent execution of RMCF in-store cooking procedures. While the cooking techniques can be informative and entertaining, the primary emphasis should be in showmanship and product quality.
  - Online Brand Champion Award: Instagram: **Lynn Eddinger**, Tustin, California; awarded to the store that regularly posts not only RMCF products but promotions, and engages with people on their page in a timely manner, utilizes promotional materials from RMCF, Inc. as well as professional images from Graphicsmaker, and the RMCF images library.
  - Outstanding Outside Sales Award: **LaTricia Adkins '11**, Fresno, California; awarded to the store that best demonstrates a consistent, strategic effort in the building of product sales through fundraising, corporate orders, special events and weddings. They represent the brand outside of their store with logo wear, RMCF brochures, business cards and samples. This store utilizes marketing and networking to drive authorized outside sales, and actively promotes its offering through various media in-store and online.
- Rookie of the Year: **Ross Theesen '15**, Coronado, New Mexico; awarded to the new owner that shows the most dedication to Five Commandments and the RMCF brand; actively communicates with franchise support and follows the instruction received during training. Since the entrepreneurship program began in the Craig School of Business, six other store owners have earned Rookie of the Year honors.
- Fudge for Troops 2016: **Allie Canaday '11**, Lehi, Utah; 756 pounds of fudge donated to troops.
- **Mark B. Hamilton** taught writing and literature at Missouri Western and retired in 2008 to pursue writing projects from his journey along the Lewis and Clark route. Hamilton undertook a three-year, 7,600-mile trek, traveling on Lewis and Clark's approximate timetable, and just as they did, he traveled by paddle and pack mule. A magazine article about his journey is in the fall 2004 edition of the Missouri Western Magazine. Hamilton recently published "100 Miles of Heat," a selection of poems, the first major publication from those efforts. The chapbook can be purchased at finishinglinepress.com.
- The MT1 pilot program in 2015-16 that was taught by **Dr. Gary Clapp**, coordinator of Workforce Development and Grants Procurement in the Western Institute, received the first Think Ahead Award from the Heartland Foundation's Think Ahead Forum in November 2016. The program is a course where students can earn a Manufacturing Technician Level 1 certificate. Dr. Clapp, in collaboration with several area businesses, the

St. Joseph Chamber of Commerce and the St. Joseph School District, taught the first course in 2015-16 at Hillyard Technical Center in St. Joseph.

- **Natasha Oakes**, associate director of Athletics for compliance/senior woman administrator, was named chair of the NCAA Legislative Committee for Division II athletics, which includes approximately 300 colleges and universities throughout the United States. She also had an article published in the NCAA Division II 2016 annual yearbook.
- **Dr. Robert Vartabedian**, Missouri Western president, will begin a term as chair of the MIAA/NCAA Presidents Council in June 2017.
- Griffon Yearbook students received a third place Best of Show Award at the 2016 Associate Collegiate Press convention in Washington, D.C. Also, students received the following awards at the 2016 College Media Association convention in Atlanta:
  - **Abhash Shrestha**, first place for Best TV Promo/PSA
  - **Mochila Review**, third place Best Podcast
  - **Kiarash Abhari** and **Violetta Valeeva**, first place News Package
  - **Jeni Swope**, second place Short Documentary
  - **Brent Rosenauer**, **Jessica Kopp** and **Jake Dart**, first place Onsite Conference Promo.

Additionally, students **Jasmine Taylor** and **Bryant Scott**, along with Yearbook Advisor **Dr. James Carviou**, presented a workshop that focused on best practices in cover design along with ways to digitally innovate college yearbooks. ■

## Associate dean hired for School of Nursing and Health Professions

Dr. Robyn Gleason was named associate dean of the School of Nursing and Health Professions and began her duties this past January. Prior to coming to Missouri Western, she was the dean of graduate nursing at Keiser University in Fort Lauderdale, Florida.

Dr. Gleason earned her doctorate in nursing and master's



Dr. Robyn Gleason

Cookman University's School of

degrees in nursing and public health from the University of Florida. She also received a graduate certificate in health informatics from Duke University. Prior to joining Keiser University in 2015, she taught at the University of Florida College of Nursing and Bethune-

Nursing. Dr. Gleason is a 2016 Fellow in the Leadership in Academic Nursing Program of the American Association of Colleges of Nursing.

The School includes master's degree programs in nursing, and undergraduate programs for nursing, health information management, physical therapist assistant and the new population health management degree, established by a gift from Mosaic Life Care. ■

## Drum Major for Justice Award recipients named

A Missouri Western employee, a Missouri Western student and a community member were honored with Drum Major for Justice Awards at the 2017 Martin Luther King, Jr. Banquet in January: Joanne Katz, Alexis Williams and Jeremy Eaton.

Katz, professor of legal studies, has dedicated her professional and personal life to building bridges and being an advocate for peace, especially through her work with restorative justice. Katz also helped develop a minor in peace and conflict studies at Missouri Western.

Williams works in the Center for

Multicultural Education on campus. She is very active in making a positive difference in the lives of students of color, her nomination read. Williams is a leader in the campus NAACP student group and serves on the University's Diversity & Inclusion Task Force.

Community member Jeremy Eaton has volunteered for several community organizations and works with disadvantaged children in Mumbai, India. Eaton founded the nonprofit organization Griffey School for the Arts to serve as an advocate for the arts and help bring families together. ■

On Monday, Aug. 21, 2017, a total solar eclipse will begin at 1:06:27 p.m. and will last for approximately two minutes and 38 seconds in St. Joseph, Missouri, and Missouri Western personnel are planning events for astronomy buffs the day before.

On Sunday, Aug. 20, Missouri Western will host eclipse experts on campus: Michael Bakich, senior editor of Astronomy Magazine; Bryan Busby, chief meteorologist at KMBC-TV in Kansas City; Mike Reynolds, professor of astronomy at Florida State College at Jacksonville; and Derrick Pitts, chief astronomer at the Franklin Institute in Philadelphia. Check out missouriwestern.edu/eclipse2017 for times and locations.

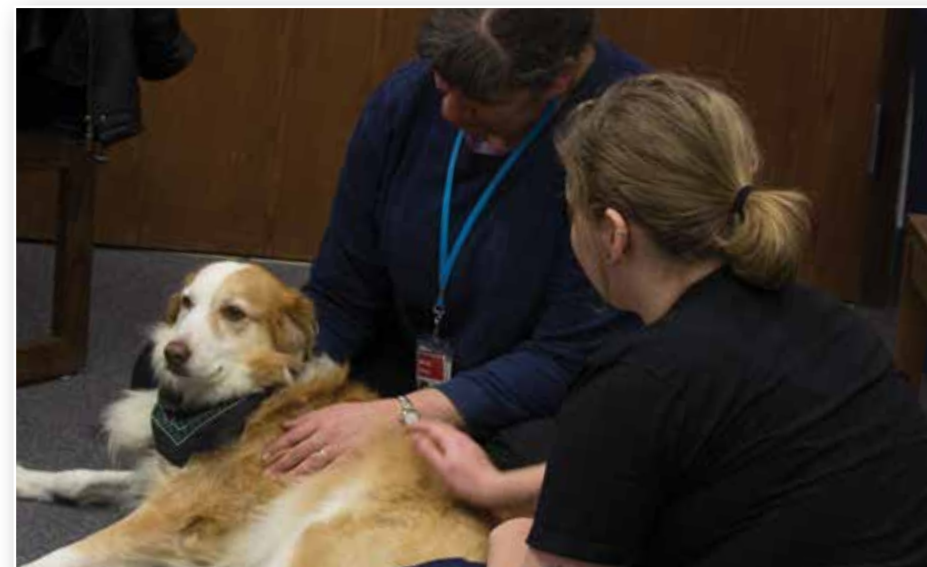
The Walter Cronkite Memorial in Spratt Hall will also be open extended hours on Sunday, and will feature space displays and a space suit photo opportunity. And, the Bushman Planetarium will show eclipse-themed shows. All Sunday events are free and open to the public.

The eclipse will also be live streamed on the website mentioned above. ■



## Animal Therapy on Campus

Dr. Melinda Kovacs, assistant professor of political science, brought Bailey, her therapy dog, to campus as a stress reliever during finals week last semester.





# Yes, you can – the BGS degree

Dr. Gordon Mapley knows that sometimes, life gets in the way of a college degree. As executive director of the Western Institute, he knew there were hundreds of people in St. Joseph who had a lot of credit hours without completing a degree, and he wanted to figure out a way to help them finish their college education, earn a bachelor's degree and possibly advance their careers.

## The Bachelor of General Studies

With those goals in mind, a new degree program was created for students with 75 credit hours or more – the Bachelor of General Studies – and Missouri Western began offering it in the fall of 2013. To date, 133 students have graduated with the degree.

Dr. Mapley explained that the BGS degree, which he calls a “completion degree,” requires the same amount of hours as any other bachelor's degree from the University and it has the same requirements for general studies courses and upper level courses. The difference, he said, is that instead of choosing one major, the student chooses two minors (concentrations).

In most cases, many of the hours they have already earned count toward at least one of the minors, which reduces

the hours they need to graduate. Dr. Mapley said the minors can even be customized if students earned hours from a different university.

Eric Kramer, academic advisor in the Western Institute, said last year, graduates in the BGS program needed an average of 34 hours to complete a degree, and it took them an average of three semesters and one summer to do it. However, he said he has worked with some whose credits already fit into the BGS degree, and they only needed to apply for graduation.

Kramer said the degree can be for students who have been taking courses for several years, but changed majors a lot so they have credit hours in a variety of programs. Or, it could be students who earned a lot of hours in one field and decided that it wasn't the career field for them.

“Many started out as traditional students, and then life happened,” said Dr. Melody Smith, interim assistant dean of the Western Institute who also works with the degree program.

That was the case for Bridget Blevins '16 and Brandy Miller '14, who earned the degree, and Will Carter, who will graduate this month.

## Bridget Blevins '16

Blevins, director of communications for the St. Joseph School District, had earned an associate degree from Highland Community College in Highland, Kansas right after she graduated from high school, and she transferred to Missouri Western with the intent of earning a communication degree. When she started working for KQTV full-time as a student, she continued taking classes, but realized her hectic work schedule made it too difficult.

“Being in media is demanding, and there was no such thing as normal work hours,” she said. “It became too difficult to get to class on time, or even to get to class.”



With her education on hold, Blevins stayed in the television business for 17 years, advancing to news director and anchor before she left KQTV last year.

When she returned to Missouri Western in 2015 to earn the BGS degree, she needed just 16 credit hours to graduate and had already earned the hours she needed for a communication minor. Blevins took the classes she needed online to earn a psychology minor, and was ready to graduate within a year of returning.

“Part of me was embarrassed that it took me so long to get a degree,” she said. “I was able to find success and work my way up in my career, but getting that degree was about finishing what I started. I was really proud.”

Blevins also noted that she would not have been able to apply for her current position without the degree.

## Brandy Miller '14

Miller also can attest to the value of having a bachelor's degree. One month after she graduated with her BGS, she was hired at Herzog Contracting Corp. in St. Joseph, Missouri, as a corporate recruiter, which was a step up from her previous job.

“That was a great graduation gift,” she said.



After graduating from Benton High School in St. Joseph, Miller worked full-time and went to college parttime, but marriage and a family eventually led to her stepping away from her coursework. When she looked into the BGS, she realized she only needed five classes to graduate, so she took four online and one in the classroom. Miller earned minors in communication and business.

“I always wanted to get a degree, and I couldn't believe that that was all the hours I needed to get it,” she said. “It was a great opportunity.”

She participated in the fall 2014 commencement ceremony so that her two daughters could see her graduate.

“It took me a long time, but it made me proud.”

## Grant helps students earn degree

A parallel program to Missouri Western's Bachelor of General Studies is the Buchanan County Degree Attainment Initiative, which began in 2012 when Missouri Western was awarded a \$1 million grant from the state and named one of nine Innovation Campuses in Missouri.

In order to receive funding from the grant, Missouri Western partners with area businesses whose employees can receive up to \$7,500 to assist them in completing their degree. Along with University courses, the students' employers must provide on-site training and mentoring.

Additionally, for each partnering business, at least 51 percent of the scholarship recipients must be low or moderate income, using the federal government criteria. Sixteen companies have partnered with Missouri Western.

The initiative was established by the state to foster economic growth and workforce development by assisting Missouri residents in completing their college degrees, Dr. Mapley said. Since it began, 27 participants have graduated, and 25 students were in the program in fall 2016. ■

*continued on next page*



# Yes, you can – the BGS degree



## Will Carter

In 2014, student athlete Will Carter was busy balancing his college career and playing on the Griffon baseball team. Then life happened. At around the same time, he was diagnosed with cancer and his fiancé found out she was pregnant. Carter continued to take classes for one more semester, even though he had two cancer surgeries that semester. (He is appreciative of his professors who were willing to work with him to complete his classes.) Then he went to work fulltime and put his degree on hold. His daughter was born in March 2015.

In the spring of 2016, Kramer, who was Carter's advisor when he was an athlete, called him about the BGS program.

"That opened the door for me," Carter said. He could take all but two courses online, which offered just the flexibility he needed. He will graduate this month with minors in business and entrepreneurship.

"These programs are fantastic," he says. "Missouri Western is a great school to go to and get an education. They try to help you and give you a chance to achieve at the highest level."

Carter plans to use his degree to help him advance in his current position at Tilton, Thomas and Morgan, Inc., an insurance agency in St. Joseph, but he is also happy that his daughter will someday realize the importance of sticking to your dreams to achieve your goals.

"It's a pretty amazing degree," Carter said. "Graduating was one of my biggest goals."

## Online option

Many of the students working on the BGS degree are primarily or entirely taking online courses, and online course offerings have continued to grow. Most of those returning to college to earn the BGS degree are working full-time, Dr. Mapley said, and earning all the credits they need in a physical classroom just isn't possible.

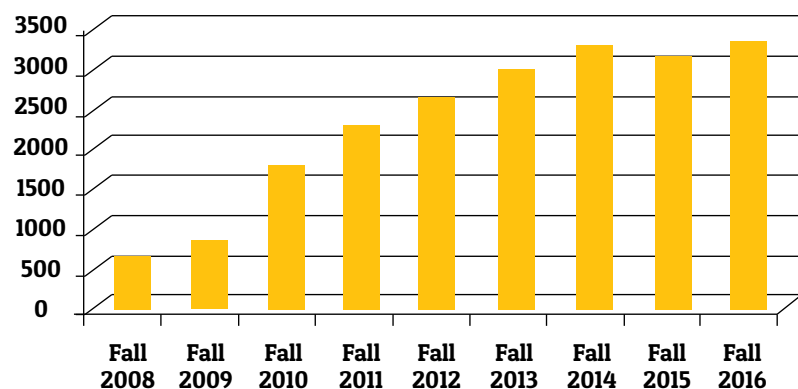
Since Missouri Western began the initiative to grow its online programming, the number of titles in the inventory has grown from 30 in 2008 to 302 in 2016. There were 257 active online titles in fall 2016.

Blevins, Miller and Carter all agree that they probably would not have been able to complete their degrees without the online options.

For more information about the BGS degree, go to [missouriwestern.edu/](http://missouriwestern.edu/) completion or call the Western Institute at (816) 271-4100.

"We really are transforming lives through the power of education," Dr. Mapley said. ■

## MWSU Online Enrollment



## Student joins leaders in DC

"It was an honor and a privilege to represent Missouri Western." That, Paul Granberry said, was his reaction to being selected to attend the National Prayer Breakfast and Student Weekend in Washington, DC in February 2017.

Granberry, an accounting major from St. Louis, was only one of about 100 students from across the globe who attended the student weekend. The prayer breakfast was held on Thursday, Feb. 2, and the weekend event was from Friday to Sunday.

"I left home at 5 a.m. on Wednesday and got back at 9 p.m. Monday, and I was busy every day from 6 a.m. until 10 p.m.," Granberry said. "It was amazing, and I was blessed to be a part of it."

He said the weekend involved student leaders connecting with each other, discussing world problems and seeking solutions. They were in discussion groups of five students each, and the other four students in his group were from universities across the country. Granberry said it was a great experience and he learned a lot about leadership.

His most memorable moment, he says, was getting to see a VIP screening of "The Shack," which wasn't in theaters until March. He also met the author of the book by the same name, Wm. Paul Young, who spoke to the group and gave them one of his other books, "Lies We Believe About God."

"I definitely have to see the movie again," Granberry said shortly after he returned from Washington.

The students also toured the Capitol and saw Congress in session.

Granberry had attended the Governor's Student Leadership Forum in Jefferson City, Missouri in January 2016 and was subsequently invited to the National Leadership Forum in Atlanta in October 2016 for about 200 students. A man he met at the Atlanta forum then nominated him for the February event in Washington.

One of the criteria for attendees included holding leadership roles, and Granberry certainly has that distinction. At Missouri Western, although he is only a sophomore, he is involved in the Student Government Association (SGA) and the Gentlemen of Color student organization, and he serves as vice president of the Black Student Union, as an orientation leader and as a resident assistant in Scanlon Hall.

"I definitely want to help shape and mold the Missouri Western and St. Joseph communities," he said.

Granberry is also exploring internship opportunities with a House or Senate member in Washington this coming summer and plans to run for SGA president as a senior at Missouri Western. He hopes to run for political office someday and is earning a minor in political science.

Granberry says he also wants to spread the word about his experience at the National Prayer Breakfast and Student Weekend and encourage other



Paul Granberry and Sen. Claire McCaskill in Washington, DC.

Missouri Western students to pursue a nomination.

"It was great to connect with leaders around the world and learn how to better myself, as well as my community." ■

## Chess Club

Officers from the Missouri Western Chess Club visited Julie Bravo's fifth-grade classroom at Oak Grove Elementary School in St. Joseph, Missouri this spring. Teaching the students how to play chess were Cecilia Tackett, president; Ben Hart, vice president; and Jaylen Words, secretary/treasurer.





## Women's basketball

The women's basketball team went 21-8 overall and 13-6 in MIAA play, giving the program back-to-back 20-win seasons for the first time in 12 years. The Griffons claimed three victories over ranked opponents, including knocking off then-No. 11 Emporia State at home on Feb. 11. The team won nine of its final 11 regular-season games to claim the fourth seed in the MIAA Championships.

Its season ended in the MIAA postseason tournament quarterfinals with a loss to eventual runner-up Central Oklahoma, but was not short on memorable moments. Senior guard Chelsea Dewey was named first-team All-MIAA, and senior forward Sefulu Faavae was named to the MIAA All-defensive team.

Head coach for the women is Rob Edmisson. ■

## Men's basketball

The men's basketball season record may not have matched the efforts of the team. Throughout the 7-21 season, the Griffons made a habit of grinding games out, and their hard-nosed style of play kept nearly every game low-scoring and close. Eight of the team's 21 losses were by single digits, including four of its last five.

The season featured victories over top MIAA competition and a memorable win at Division I Southern Illinois-Edwardsville on Dec. 10. It was the program's first win over a Division I program in 36 years and highlighted the team's signature style as they limited SIU-Edwardsville to just 44 points in the win.

The men are coached by Brett Weiberg.

At the MIAA tournament in March, Head Coach Tom Smith and his 2003 men's basketball team were honored as the champions of the first MIAA tournament at Municipal Auditorium 15 years ago. The women's team advanced to the title game that year, as well. ■



## Spring Sports

As this issue went to press, the softball team, coached by Jen Trotter, had a record of 26-8, and the baseball team, coached by Buzz Verduzco, was at 15-15. In women's golf, sophomore Shi Qing Ong claimed her fourth first-place finish of the team's eight events. ■

## Charity Golf Classic

Mark your calendars for Saturday, June 3 and Monday, June 5 for the 15th annual MWSU/YWCA Charity Golf Classic. The social and auction will begin at 6 p.m. June 3 at the St. Jo Frontier Casino with golf on June 5 at the St. Joseph Country Club. See [gogriffons.com](http://gogriffons.com) for more details or call Brett Esely at (816) 271-5904. ■

## Football coaching staff complete

Head football coach Matt Williamson '96, who was hired at Missouri Western in December 2016, compiled his coaching staff for the 2017 season, and it includes three alumni.

Scorpio Horn '05, defensive line, former Griffon defensive and offensive lineman, spent the past three seasons as head coach at William Chrisman High School in Independence, Missouri. Horn was defensive coordinator for three seasons at Park Hill South High School before moving to Chrisman.

Colin McQuillan '12, running backs, transitions from graduate assistant to full-time assistant on the Griffon coaching staff. He served as a defensive graduate assistant for two years at Missouri Western after high school coaching stops at Wyandotte High School and Riverside High School. McQuillan was also a student assistant at Missouri Western while earning his bachelor's degree.

Chet Pobolish, offensive coordinator, returns to the MIAA after a successful playing career at Emporia State 1996-99. He comes to Missouri Western after spending six seasons in various positions on the Southeastern Louisiana University football staff, including offensive coordinator for two seasons.

Justin Richter, defensive backs, was most recently a defensive graduate assistant at the University of California-Berkley. He also coached at West Texas A&M, University of New Mexico, Angelo State and New Mexico Military Institute.

Patrick St. Louis '08, run game coordinator/offensive line, returns to his alma mater after spending six of the last seven seasons at Morehead State University. The former Griffon offensive lineman was offensive coordinator at Morehead State for the past two seasons after serving as offensive line coach since 2013.

Like Williamson, Mike Walton, defensive coordinator, comes to

Missouri Western from Stephen F. Austin University, where he was the special teams coordinator and safeties coach since 2014.

Ryan Watts, wide receivers, was most recently an offensive assistant at Abilene Christian. Prior to that, he was a graduate assistant and assistant director of football operations at Stephen F. Austin University.

Williamson also announced the addition of Kedrick Harrison as a graduate assistant and made some changes to existing graduate assistants' duties.

The staff hit the ground running, announcing the signing of 41 student athletes for the 2017 season on Feb. 1. That is the largest signing class in more than five years, and includes signees from eight different states.

The 48th season of Missouri Western football will kick off Thursday, Aug. 31 at Nebraska-Kearney. The 2017 schedule will feature six home games and five on the road, all against MIAA competition. ■

## Be a part of Griffon Athletics

Membership in the official athletics booster club of Missouri Western Athletics, the Gold Coat Club, is open now.

Founded in 1969, the club raises funds to support the endeavors of the athletic programs at Missouri Western. Membership helps provide coaches and student athletes with the necessary resources to remain competitive at the highest level of NCAA Division II athletics.

Gold Coat Club members enjoy season ticket packages, reserved parking, merchandise discounts and invitations to exclusive Missouri Western Athletics events.

To learn more or to sign up, visit [gogriffons.com](http://gogriffons.com) or call Brett Esely at (816) 271-5904. ■

## New sports teams shaping up

Missouri Western will see six new teams in the 2017-18 academic year with the addition of men's and women's cross country, men's and women's indoor track and field, and men's and women's outdoor track and field.

Head coach Marc Bierbaum hired assistant coach Cody Ingold and the two signed close to 60 student athletes

for the teams. The teams will feature a mixture of new students to the University and some current students. Additionally, some team members are current students who have not previously participated in athletics at Missouri Western.

Competition begins this fall with the men's and women's cross country teams. ■

**Check out [gogriffons.com](http://gogriffons.com) for game times, ticket sales, merchandise and more.**



# CENTENNIAL CAPITAL CAMPAIGN: TRANSFORMING LIVES

## RENOVATION PLANNING BEGINS FOR POTTER HALL

At its meeting Dec. 8, 2016, Missouri Western's Board of Governors approved the selection of the firm Patterhn Ives LLC, of St. Louis, to provide planning and design services for renovations to Potter Hall. Patterhn Ives was



selected from 15 firms that responded to Missouri Western's request for qualifications, and four were invited to campus to make presentations to a selection committee.

"We had a number of qualified firms express interest in the project, but Patterhn Ives set itself apart with a long record of successfully completing fine art and higher education building projects," said Dr. Cale Fessler, vice president for Financial Planning and Administration.

Possible renovations for Potter Hall, home of the School of Fine Arts, include the addition of a studio theater performance space, a screening room, a dedicated computer lab and a costume shop. Other renovations are planned for classrooms in the existing building.

In the ensuing months since they were hired, Patterhn Ives met with several employees, especially those who work in Potter Hall, and began design work on the proposed renovations.

This past spring, Eric Hoffman, partner with Patterhn Ives, brought 12 graduate students from Washington University's Sam Fox School of Design and Visual Arts in St. Louis to work with Missouri Western students. (Hoffman is also a professor of practice for the School.) The Missouri Western students answered the Washington University students' questions and discussed Potter Hall needs. Student groups from both universities toured the building and discussed architectural specifications and design.

Hoffman also met with the Potter Hall building committee to discuss possible designs for additions to meet the needs of the fine arts building's constituents. He noted that there are several options for adding on to the current building.

"We start with a wish list of spaces," Hoffman said. "Then we narrow it down and get specific."



Eric Hoffman of Patterhn Ives speaks in Potter Hall

Kim Weddle '00, director of Development, attended the meeting with Hoffman and the building committee. "It's exciting to talk about all the possibilities for Potter Hall," she said. "Patterhn Ives will help us determine costs for the various projects so we can raise funds to meet those needs."

The Missouri General Assembly appropriated \$150,000 for architectural services for the Potter project with the stipulation that Missouri Western match the funding, and that funding came from the Missouri Western Foundation's Centennial Capital Campaign. ■

### *Griffons in Arizona*

Missouri Western alumni and friends gathered at the Tonto Verde Country Club in Rio Verde, Arizona in February. Joyce Coleman, Charles Bruffy '81, Ronda Meierhoffer and Mike Crouser '72 were four of the attendees. Bruffy, who is a multiple Grammy Award winner, was also a guest speaker at the event.



**There's still time to order a Victory Plaza brick!**  
Contact Kim Weddle,  
director of Development, at  
(816) 271-5648 or weddle@missouriwestern.edu.

## ARTS SOCIETY CHAIR CHANGE

Bill Wright recently stepped down as chair of the Missouri Western Arts Society advisory council, and Drew Brown became the new chair.

Wright had served as chair and advisor for the Arts Society since it was founded in 2011, and was one of the society's co-founders.

Wright said the original purpose of the society was to support and promote the University's arts programs, and the society has never strayed from that mission. Using membership dues, the society provided the funding of equipment such as a new kiln, cameras and teaching equipment for the arts programs.

It was also his idea that the 2015-16 society membership dues be given to the Centennial Capital Campaign. Those funds, \$32,000, were

used to leverage the state funds for capital improvements in Potter Hall.

"Everything we do is for the students," he said. "They need up-to-date equipment to prepare them for their professional lives. We want Missouri Western's arts programs to be on the same level with other schools." "Bill has always been there for the Arts Society, and always willing to step up and help," said Rachel Graves '03, development officer who coordinates the work of the society. "It's been wonderful working with him on the council."

Brown became chair in February 2017. The owner of Brown Investments said becoming chair of the council seemed like a logical step because he also serves (as member and chair) on several arts-related boards in the community, including the Albrecht-Kemper Museum of Art and the St. Joseph Performing Arts Association. He also serves as a docent at the art museum.



Drew Brown



Bill Wright

### *New Pool Clock Donated*

Dr. Elizabeth Latosi-Sawin donated funds to purchase a clock for the newly renovated Thomas Eagleton Indoor Pool in the M.O. Looney Complex. Dr. Latosi-Sawin's father, John A. Latosi, was a swim coach, and the clock was donated in his memory.



100 YEARS of TRANSFORMING LIVES

The Philadelphia native said his mother made sure he was exposed to a lot of arts and culture when he was growing up, including a lot of new theatrical works, and his love of the arts continued throughout his life. "My parents had a love of arts, and they passed it on to me."

Brown, who moved to St. Joseph with his wife, Charlene, in 1994, said one of his goals as chair is to make both Arts Society members and the community more aware of what Missouri Western's arts has to offer.

"I want our members to become strong advocates for Missouri Western and especially, the arts," he said. "The arts are a very important part of our culture."

Brown graduated from North Carolina Central University with a double major in biology and German, and after working a short stint as a pharmaceutical researcher, served as an officer in the U.S. Army for the next 26 years. His military career took him all over the world, and Brown said he always made sure to experience the culture and explore the arts wherever he lived.

After retiring from the military, he managed restaurants for PepsiCo and Goodcents Deli Fresh Subs, and also worked for Goodcents' corporate headquarters as a restaurant turnaround specialist.

In light of recent state allocation cuts to universities, Brown said the Arts Society is a tremendous asset and is needed now more than ever to help enhance the arts programs at Missouri Western.

"I am looking forward to working with Drew," Graves said. "We have appreciated his insight as a council member, and I am certain he will do a great job as chair." ■



# Town and gown: Community enjoys campus events

Most people would say that a benefit of living in a college town is the number and variety of events offered for the community, and in that regard, Missouri Western does not disappoint. A look back at the past year of events that were open to the community reveals everything from theatre productions, interesting speakers and entertainers, great sporting events, and opportunities to learn about international cultures.

Last month, Missouri Western and the community enjoyed a nationally renowned poet when Nikki Giovanni visited campus. Giovanni was a guest judge for the 2017 Mochila Review, Missouri Western's national undergraduate journal, and Dr. Marianne Kunkel, assistant professor of English, invited her to speak to students and read her poetry. High school students in the area also received special invitations to attend.

Giovanni, a University Distinguished Professor at Virginia Tech, is an American poet, writer, commentator and activist.

## Sports, theatre and art

Theatre productions this year included "The 25th Annual Putnam County Spelling Bee," "Blur," "Macbeth" and "The Wedding Singer." The community is also always invited to participate in the theatre program's 48-Hour Film Festival, which is held in the fall.

Kurt McGuffin, athletic director, calls the Department of Athletics the University's "front porch," and he said he loves to see the community support the sports teams and attend athletic events.

Sport enthusiasts in the community can cheer on the Griffons almost year-round: football, soccer and volleyball in the fall, men's and women's basketball in the winter, softball and baseball in the spring, and men's and women's golf in the fall and spring. Starting this fall, Missouri Western is adding men's and women's track and field, and men's and women's cross country to its sports lineup.



Additionally, the newly renovated Spratt Memorial Stadium with a large video scoreboard debuted this past fall and greatly enhanced the fan experience for football and soccer games, McGuffin said.

For the first time, the Department of Art hosted an entrepreneur speaker series, Name Your Path: Prep Art Career. The series featured a different entrepreneur each month throughout the spring semester. Several other academic departments also hosted guest speakers on a wide variety of topics throughout the year.

Besides theatre productions and athletics, the majority of community events are planned by three offices on campus: the Center for Multicultural Education, the Center for Student Involvement and International Student Services.

## International events

The International Fair, hosted by International Student Services last fall, drew almost 600 attendees, which included a large number of families from the community. At the fair, international

students from 38 countries set up displays and served cuisine from their home countries.

The fair is a great opportunity for the community to learn about several countries, but it is also a great time for the international students to meet and visit with community members, said Fumi Cheever, assistant director of International Student Services. International students tend to stay on campus and not get out in the community too much, she said, so this gives them a chance to connect with community members. "They learn from each other."

Cheever said when planning events, their office tries to find a balance between fun and educational, and almost all their events are open to the community.

"People in the community tell us they look forward to our events," she said. "When local people come see the students and ask questions, that means a lot to the students."

## Student and community involvement

The Center for Student Involvement, led by Isaiah Collier, assistant dean of Student Development, oversees the Greek social organizations, the Western Activities Council and the Nontraditional and Commuter Student Center.

*continued on next page*



**"I wasn't doing it for myself anymore," he said. "I was doing it for everyone who was rooting for me. Everyone who was hiding in the closet but couldn't be comfortable with themselves. I was doing it for those people, so I had a burden on my shoulders, but I was ready to meet the challenge."**

- Michael Sam

Campus and community members enjoy Missouri Western activities and events such as "Macbeth" (top), Step Afrika (middle), football games (bottom), international events (bottom left, next page), and guest speakers (bottom right, next page).



continued from pg. 17

Although the Center for Student Involvement focuses on events for students to help them stay actively engaged on campus, Collier noted that almost all are open to the community.

“It’s a great opportunity to build bonds and strengthen ties in the community,” he said. “The community gains a lot when they interact with students.”

He said he also likes to see community members have a chance to check out the campus and see what has changed since they last visited.

One successful event that is open to the community last fall is Standing in Your Truth lecture series. Speakers included Michael Sam, the first openly gay NFL player; and Brian Banks, who was falsely accused of rape and spent five years in prison.

A big weekend for the center is Family Weekend, when students’ families are invited to visit. Last fall, the weekend included a carnival, planetarium shows and a football game. Comedian Jeff Scheen performed on Friday evening of that weekend. He was one of several novelty acts that the center hosted last year. This spring, the center also hosted Griffopolooza Comedy Show.



Collier’s office also hosts Western Warmup, where community businesses and organizations are invited to set up a table on campus during the first week of school. In fall 2016, almost 60 businesses and organizations participated in the event.

The annual spring concert at the Civic Arena is another event for both

students and community members. In April, American Authors and X Ambassadors performed, and past performers have included Maddie & Tae, Ludacris and Brycevine, Sara Evans, Puddle of Mudd, Saliva, and Blake Shelton.



**“You should be clear on your goals. What does it mean to you to be an artist?”**

- Eric Swangstu, artist entrepreneur

Events held on campus in the past year include an International Fair (top, and middle left, next page), Midday Melodies (bottom left), guest speakers (bottom right, and top next page), Convocation speaker Cokie Roberts (middle right, next page), a Hispanic Heritage banquet (bottom left, next page), and a research poster presentation (bottom right, next page).

## Inclusive events

Latoya Fitzpatrick, director of the Center for Multicultural Education, said they are always happy to see community members attend their events. Planning a wide variety of events that represent several cultures, Fitzpatrick says their focus is on education.

At the start of the school year in 2016, the center hosted Finding the Faith, where churches from the community set up displays in the student union so students could explore churches in the community. That was the second year the center had hosted the event, and Fitzpatrick said it was a big success, regarding both student attendance and the number of churches that participated.

The center plans events around designated months, such as Hispanic Heritage Month (September–October), LGBT History Month (October), Native American Heritage Month (November), Black History Month (February) and Women’s History Month (March).

“They all represent groups on campus, and we want them to feel included,” she said. “We want them to know that the campus cares about their cultures.”

The events, she said, also help students interact with people from the community. “Any way we can make those connections happen is beneficial.”



**“We write because we believe the human spirit cannot be tamed and should not be trained.”**

- Nikki Giovanni







## Object Spotlight: NASA Display

A NASA Display is part of the Walter Cronkite Memorial because of Cronkite's great interest in reporting on the space flights and moon landings. Because St. Joseph is in the path of totality for the solar eclipse Aug. 21, the Memorial will extend its hours to 10 a.m.-4 p.m. on Sunday, Aug. 20. There will also be a special display with a NASA space suit and a photo op.

## About the Walter Cronkite Memorial

The Walter Cronkite Memorial opened on Missouri Western's campus in November 2013 and features more than 6,000 sq. ft. of exhibit space, including several interactive kiosks and a replica of Cronkite's newsroom from the late 1960s and early 1970s. Visitors to the newsroom are able to sit behind a replica of Cronkite's famous news desk and have their picture taken.

Additionally, three multimedia performances, "Cronkite," "Harry and Walter: Missouri's Native Sons," and "King and Cronkite" have been produced as part of the Memorial. Recordings of the performances may be available to groups, and live performances are periodically scheduled.

The Memorial is open seven days a week, closing only on Easter, Christmas and New Year's Day. It is located in the Spratt Hall atrium and is free and open to the public.



## Nixon/Cronkite exhibit

A temporary exhibit featuring the connections between President Richard Nixon and Walter Cronkite went up in the Walter Cronkite Memorial in late February, and will be replaced later this month.

Cronkite covered Nixon's presidential runs and his landmark trip to China, and he was determined to cover the Watergate scandal that began in 1972. The display includes CBS Evening News reports, photographs and objects relating to Cronkite's reporting, along with loans from Cronkite's children and the St. Joseph Music Foundation. Additionally, the Emmy that Cronkite received for his reporting of the Watergate scandal is also on display.



The Department of History and Geography hosted a professional development workshop on campus for social studies teachers in the St. Joseph School District in February. The afternoon ended with a tour of the Walter Cronkite Memorial. Amanda Morrow, Memorial coordinator, gave the tour.

## Student creates a GriffsGiveBack center

When Brent Rosenauer graduates this month, he is leaving behind a legacy of community service that he hopes will continue long after his college days.

Last fall, he created GriffsGiveBack, an office on campus that serves as a central point for volunteering in the community and well, giving back. Shana Meyer, vice president of Student Affairs, liked his idea so much she gave him office space. The Student Government Association liked his idea so much, the senators decided to fund him.

So in January 2017, Rosenauer, a native of St. Joseph and the Savannah area, opened his office. If an organization in the community needs volunteers, they call him and he finds the volunteers. If students, employees or alumni want to volunteer, they call him and he finds an organization for them.

In the short time he's been open, Rosenauer got eight Planet Aid bins on campus for clothing donations, and he held a campus cleanup day in February (50 people showed up to help). He's also held meetings with Noyes Home and United Way staff to help address their volunteer needs and is working on a recycling initiative for campus.



Brent Rosenauer in his newly created GriffsGiveBack office in the Blum Union.

"There are a lot of motivated people who want to see this office succeed," he said.

Rosenauer said he came to Missouri Western with the idea of getting his general studies credits in and then transferring, but once he became involved on campus, he realized he didn't want to leave. The convergent media major spent three years working on the Griffon News, the student newspaper.

"Missouri Western has more opportunities than any other university has to offer. I've had a lot of big ideas, and there has never been a professor or administrator that told me no."

And what is going to happen when he graduates this month? Rosenauer says he isn't worried about the office because a lot of students have expressed interest in taking the position on after he leaves.

Since he started this initiative, he is leaning toward a career in nonprofits.

"I want to change the world in a positive way," he says. "That's what I want to do with my life." ■

## GriffsGiveBack

Student Gillian Evans, and Janessa, Nick and Nehemiah Edwards, and John Gregory help at the campus cleanup day as part of the GriffsGiveBack initiative. Nick Edwards and Gregory are Missouri Western employees.





## From the Alumni Association President

Dear Fellow Alumni,

This has been a great year to be your alumni president. The Alumni Association has gathered at many events and celebrations, and I am unable to describe the enormous pride I feel for Missouri Western and what it offers. We celebrated a great Homecoming, a wonderful group of mid-year graduates and kicked off our Alumni Admissions Recruitment Team in St. Joseph and Kansas City.

In the coming year, we will focus on events and activities that cultivate alumni, emphasize diversity and inclusion, assist with enrollment and retention, and help the University in finding ways to counter the cuts in state assistance.

There will be a concerted effort to increase alumni attendance at Homecoming, the Alumni Awards Banquet, the R. Dan Boulware Convocation on Critical Issues, Commencement, and athletic events.

We will also introduce the Great Griffon Awards as a way to recognize more alumni who are doing exceptional work in their places of employment and/or their communities, as well as three new Alumni Association Student Leadership Awards to recognize the outstanding contributions our students make to campus life. Please make sure you check out the new criteria and the various nomination processes on the alumni web page. (See the article on the next page.)

We will also focus on developing more alumni networks to bring people together that share a common purpose or education area. We currently have several networks that are very active and meet many needs: Mama Griffs (for alumni with children), Forever Griffons (for our alumni who have graduated 40



Mary (Sprake) Vaughan '79

or more years), Craig School of Business, the Black Alumni Network, and the Griffon Band Alumni. We are always open to more, so if you have an idea, please share it with us.

I strongly encourage you to get involved. Whether it's volunteering, attending events, or joining the Western League for Excellence with your

annual gift, you will be more aware of what's going on and appreciate what the University means to the community, region, state and beyond.

Our alumni are our greatest assets. No university is strong without having passionate and committed alumni. So make a plan today to get involved, show your spirit and be a part of this outstanding University and Alumni Association. You can be a part of the excitement!

Again, it has been a pleasure to serve you as your alumni president. Kudos to the Alumni Board and Colleen Kowich, your alumni director, for an outstanding year. Thank You!

Mary Vaughan '79

### | Future Griffs at the Chocolate Factory |

Evan Blakley Hitchcock poses with Truffles, the Rocky Mountain Chocolate Factory bear, at Future Griffs at the Chocolate Factory in February in St. Joseph. He is the son of James Hitchcock and Julie Blakley Hitchcock '92.



## Coming Events

**May 6** | Spring Commencement, 11 a.m., Craig Field in Spratt Memorial Stadium.

**June 3** | Alumni Day at the K, Royals vs. Indians, game time 1:15 p.m., Kauffman Stadium, Kansas City, Missouri.

**June 17** | Alumni Day at the Mustangs, Phil Welch Stadium, St. Joseph, Missouri.

**Aug. 20** | Total Solar Eclipse events, see pg. 7

**Aug. 26** | Griffon Day of Service. Alumni across the country are encouraged to volunteer for service in their communities. That day, the freshmen participating in Missouri Western's orientation program, Griffon Edge, will be volunteering on campus and across the community. Join them in your community!

**Sept. 12** | R. Dan Boulware Convocation on Critical Issues featuring Martin Luther King III.

**Oct. 28** | Homecoming 2017: The Legend of Griffon Hollow

## Pat Dillon: Faithful, proud and true

Among the many nonprofit organizations in St. Joseph, it would probably be difficult to find anyone who doesn't know Pat Dillon. But more than that, it would be difficult to find a nonprofit board in St. Joseph that he hasn't served on.

Dillon, vice president for advocacy and government relations for Mosaic Life Care in St. Joseph, said his position at the hospital, which he has held for three years, is tailor-made for him because he interacts with the community daily.

"If I wrote my ideal job description, this would be it," he says. "I really enjoy it."

Basically, he says his duties include meeting with community entities such as the school district, the city council and area organizations and businesses to see what Mosaic Life Care can do for them.

Dillon, a native of St. Joseph, owned and operated the Dillon Company for several years before he went to work for Mosaic nine years ago in retail development.

Along with serving on the boards (sometimes as chair) of the Chamber



Pat Dillon presents a Missouri Western Foundation philanthropy award to a student organization.

of Commerce, United Way, Sertoma, YMCA and Habitat for Humanity, Dillon has served on Missouri Western's Foundation Board of Directors for nine years, or three terms. In that role, he chaired its development committee and worked on two of the University's capital campaigns. He also helped start a giving society, the Western League for Excellence. He also served on the Foundation's directorship, executive and bylaws committees. Although his term

recently ended on the board, he agreed to stay on the development committee.

"Missouri Western is such an asset to the community. It is one of those entities that make a huge impact," he says. "And support for those entities is crucial."

Dillon says he volunteers for two main reasons. First, he wants to give back to the community that has been supportive of him and that he depends on; and second, because it's the right thing to do. He said he chooses to volunteer for organizations that are "difference makers," and one of his passions is early childhood education.

True to his giving personality, Dillon, who is owner of the Dillon Company again, is quick to step back out of the public eye and give credit to others.

"We have such a great volunteer base in this community. There are so many others who do so much more than I do."

"Missouri Western and the community truly appreciate Pat's commitment to making a difference in St. Joseph," said Jerry Pickman '85, vice president for University Advancement and executive director of the Foundation. "He has certainly been faithful, proud and true to this University." ■

## Alumni Association creates Great Griffon Awards

The Alumni Association Board of Directors recently announced two new categories of alumni recognition to be presented at the awards banquet on Oct. 27 as part of Homecoming. The Great Griffon Awards will recognize alumni from each College and School who exhibit outstanding contributions to the workforce, society or the University. The Alumni Student Leadership Awards will recognize three graduating students with the Clifford Hughes '55 Award, the International Student of the Year Award and the Graduating Student of the Year Award.

Mary Vaughan '79, association president, noted that the Alumni Association will continue to present its current awards – the Distinguished Alumni Award, the GOLD (Graduate of the Last Decade) award, the Herb '35 and Peggy Iffert Award for Outstanding Service to the University and the Distinguished Faculty Award.

Nominees for the Great Griffon Awards must have graduated at least one year between graduation and nomination or completed at least 24 credit hours at Missouri Western, and bring pride to Missouri Western through

their career achievements, volunteerism, or humanitarianism. They do not have to be working in their degree field. The nomination must include why the nominee should be considered a Great Griffon and list any known career achievements and/or community service.

Nominations have closed for 2017, but nominations for 2018 will be accepted until March 1, 2018. To nominate someone for a Great Griffon Award, email Colleen Kowich at ckowich@missouriwestern.edu or send information to Kowich at 4525 Downs Drive, Spratt 106, St. Joseph, MO 64507. ■



## Ralph Alvarez '71: Woodworker extraordinaire

On any given Thursday evening, you always know where you can find Ralph Alvarez '71. For the past 38 years, Alvarez has offered free lessons in his home workshop to anyone interested in learning woodworking and wood carving.

For the second academic year, the St. Joseph native and alumnus has been sharing his love and his immense knowledge of the craft with Missouri Western students by teaching a Tools and Techniques course on campus.

Alvarez is pleased that he is teaching a lifelong skill to the students. "It's like riding a bike; once you learn it, you know how to do it. I hope I inspire them to do it on their own."

He began creating things out of wood when he was in grade school, and as a high schooler, Alvarez got interested in building muzzle-loading rifles.

There was no woodworking class at his high school, and Missouri Western wasn't offering one when he was a student either. So he taught himself both woodworking and carving. Alvarez also learned how to work with iron when he

was building the muzzle-loaders, and he has a blacksmith shop alongside his woodworking shop.

All comers are welcome to the Thursday night lessons, he says. For the first project, you can use his wood and tools. For subsequent projects, you have to provide your own wood, but you can always use his tools. And if you have your own tools, you can sharpen them in the blacksmith shop.

There's no set number of lessons for his Thursday-evening sessions; Alvarez says one man has been coming every week since 1979. Others come for just a few weeks or a few months. And there are new students all the time, ranging in age from middle school to over 90. Lessons usually last two hours, and his shop can handle up to 15 budding woodworkers.

The adjunct professor can't decide if he likes woodworking, wood carving or iron working best, and sometimes, he says, he works with all three in the same day. When you've been an artisan with his skill for more than 50 years, it's also hard to pick a favorite project. But he did mention carousel horses, a cigar-store Indian and a carved lectern for a local church.

Alvarez spent his career teaching high school and adult education classes. He graduated from Missouri Western with a physical education degree, and began teaching that at the Dekalb, Missouri high school.

At the time, he says, he had never heard of industrial arts classes, but once he did, he began teaching that to high school students. He has retired from teaching high school full-time, but will still sub for an industrial arts class when he is called.

And what's the first thing he teaches his students? Safety. "Never forget that these tools will bite you."

Thanks to Alvarez's connections with



Above, Ralph Alvarez '71 in his woodworking class at Missouri Western. Below, left, student Indigo Gaydusek with her pineapple storage box that she made in Ralph Alvarez's class.

the St. Joseph Woodworkers Guild, that group donates high-quality wood for Missouri Western students to use. The students make decorative boxes that the Guild in turn donates to the St. Joseph AFL-CIO for its Christmas Adopt-a-Family program. Some of the items students made have been used in Guild auctions as fundraisers, and Alvarez noted that the Missouri Western student projects brought in almost \$1,000 last year.

By the end of the semester, Missouri Western students will have made a decorative box for the Guild, a cutting board, and a final project of their choice.

"It's only limited by their imagination, and these students come up with some pretty remarkable things," he said of their final projects.

For now, Alvarez plans to continue teaching his craft both on Thursday evenings and at Missouri Western.

"I really enjoy teaching young people how to do this. I'll quit when it feels like work." ■



## Aviator author: Don Bachali '57

Don Bachali '57 had been a part of the Airborne Law Enforcement Association since its earliest beginnings, but whenever he asked newer members if they knew how the association got started, no one could answer him.

"I felt like the history should be written down, and I kept waiting for someone to do it," he said.

The native of St. Joseph and current Vero Beach, Florida resident finally decided that if he wanted the history of ALEA recorded, he would have to do it himself. Last year, after a 2 ½-year effort, he self-published a 190-page "The History of the Airborne Law Enforcement Association."

According to its website, ALEA is a nonprofit educational organization founded to support and encourage the use of aircraft in public safety. The organization provides networking systems, educational seminars and product expositions, and there are more than 3,000 members today. Bachali says

that number increases to around 5,000 if you count all past members, as well.

The national organization started with a seminar in St. Louis for just seven or eight pilots, the author said. By the next year, 30 attended a seminar, and the membership just kept growing from there. Bachali noted that several Missourians were instrumental in getting ALEA started.

The book includes chapters on the first and second seminars and conventions, a history of female pilots, and a history of early law enforcement aviation programs. One chapter is titled, "Equipment: Then & Now."

After graduating with an associate degree from the St. Joseph Junior College, Bachali was accepted in the architecture program at the University of Kansas, where he also enrolled in the ROTC program.

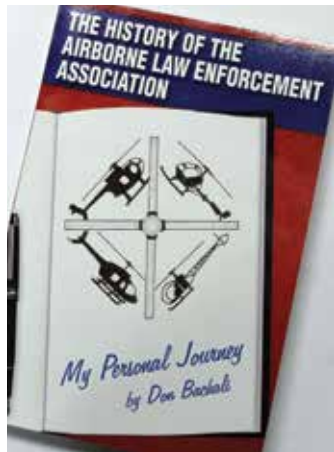
At the end of his junior year, he was accepted into the infantry branch and the Army flight training program and

began training during his senior year.

Bachali was a pilot for the Army, even completing a tour in Vietnam, until 1966. He worked then as an architect for a short time before returning to the skies with Hughes Helicopters. He retired from McDonnell Douglas in 1994.

Bachali said he has received a good response from the book. All proceeds from its sales are being used to establish a scholarship fund for dependents of law enforcement and military personnel.

"It's been a joy to write it and a great journey." ■



## Alumna creates sculpture for Oklahoma State University

Marrita Black '75 created a large bronze sculpture of a mare and her colt for a new welcome plaza on the campus of Oklahoma State University in Stillwater. Black's sculpture, "Proud

and Immortal," was selected from more than 75 artists' entries and is estimated at a cost of \$325,000.

The sculpture is 1.25 times life size and is cast in bronze, along with a bronze saddle sitting atop a nearby fence. Steve Dobbs, landscape services manager for facilities and management at OSU, explained the symbolism of the sculpture that is in the center of the plaza.

"The mare is really intended to represent alumni and staff and faculty, while the foal is meant to represent the eager freshmen ready to run out and change the world. They're leaving home, so the mare can also represent parents

and alumni keeping a watchful eye while the freshmen go and find their place at OSU."

Black's works are displayed around the world, including Italy and Brazil. One of her sculptures is in St. Joseph, Missouri – a bronze bust of Doris Hines at Mosaic Life Care. In 2002, she created "Legacy of Color," a sculpture of two mares, a foal and a stallion for the American Paint Horse Association in Fort Worth, Texas that is 1.25 times life size.

A native of Wathena, Kansas, Black graduated from Missouri Western with a degree in animal science and has trained horses for several years. She began sculpting in 1992. More information about her work can be found at [horsesculpture.com](http://horsesculpture.com). ■





# Alums find calling in foreign lands

Missouri Western alumni are not only making an impact locally and nationally, but also in foreign countries. Ally Browning '08 and Gary '97 and Rachel Chaney have found their calling in serving others – Browning in Honduras and the Chaney's in Africa.

## Eyes wide open: Ally Browning '08

As a sophomore at Missouri Western in 2006, a spring break trip to help clean up the aftermath of Hurricane Katrina in New Orleans was the first time Ally Browning '08 had ever participated in a mission trip. That eye-opening experience led her to begin volunteering at her church, and taking mission trips over both her junior- and senior-year spring breaks.

Her ongoing commitment of serving those who need it most led her to a major step along that path – she gave up a job at Boehringer Ingelheim Vetmedica Inc. in St. Joseph and began working for the nonprofit Humanity and Hope United Foundation.

Browning, whose degree is in speech communication, says she was drawn to nonprofits when she was a senior at Missouri Western. She took a public relations course that pairs student groups with nonprofit community organizations, and she worked with the local Wesley Center to develop an after-school program for at-risk girls. When Browning graduated, she was hired to run the program.



Ally Browning '08 with a friend on one of her several trips to Honduras for her employer, Humanity and Hope United Foundation.

“That class made me realize that nonprofits fit my personality,” she says. “It made me realize I wanted to help others.”

The fall after she graduated from Missouri Western, Browning, a native of St. Joseph, took her first overseas mission trip – to El Salvador – with a group called Living Water International. Her church had raised \$5,000 to dig a well in a village there.

“I saw 70-year-old men crying because they never thought they would have that much access to water,” she said. “After that, I wanted to make sure that I kept going on mission trips.”

She returned to El Salvador with Living Water International two more times, and also traveled to Haiti with the Global Orphan Project. In 2015, she traveled to Honduras with Humanity and Hope, and when she returned, she conducted a fundraiser for the nonprofit organization.

Browning also began helping the group with social media,



and within a few months, they offered her a position. She began working full-time for them in May 2016, and today is the foundation's director of engagement.

“I thought to myself, ‘this is where I need to be,’ so I left the corporate world,” she said. “It was hard, because I had awesome benefits, a great team and great pay. But it was also easy because I knew I was going to a job that I was passionate about.”

Humanity and Hope is an international nonprofit that works with local residents in Honduran communities to

**“I can’t imagine being 13 years old and having no hope of going to school. They are so grateful for the opportunity to go to school and to learn.”**

- Ally Browning '08

implement sustainable projects. The organization operates out of Indiana, but Browning works from her home in St. Joseph. Since she started, she has traveled to Honduras four times.

“It’s so hard to come back home because I am constantly thinking about them,” she said. “I appreciate that I live in a community that offers so many opportunities.”

Browning noted that their organization does not try to “Americanize” the people they work with in Honduras. Instead, they help the people come up with their own solutions. For example, the organization helped build chicken coops so women can raise chickens to feed their families and to sell the extra to grocery stores. Humanity and Hope has also helped start plantain and pineapple production. Some of the money that families earn helps pay for an education for their children.

“That really opened my eyes,” Browning said. “I can’t imagine being 13 years old and having no hope of going to school. They are so grateful for the opportunity to go to school and to learn.”

She is also excited that she is learning a lot about nonprofit organizations, because Browning can’t imagine returning to a career in a for-profit company.

“I never want to live my life with my eyes closed. I want to do what I can to help people who need it.” ■

## An eye-opening life changer: Gary '97 and Rachel Chaney

In August 2015, Gary '97 and Rachel Chaney quit their nursing jobs in the Kansas City area, rented out their home, sold their cars and most of their belongings, and moved with their two children to Zambia to oversee the building of a hospital there.

The journey to that major life change began 10 years ago in Haiti, when Gary participated in a medical mission trip.



“While I was there, I felt like this is what I should be doing,” he said. “I felt the call. It changed me.”

Rachel returned with him the next year, and the couple knew they wanted to go on more mission trips. They both continued to work full time, and Gary earned a nurse practitioner degree from Research College of Nursing in Kansas City, Missouri.

In 2010, Gary returned to Haiti after a 7.0 magnitude earthquake heavily damaged the country. But also in 2010, the couple traveled to Zambia for a medical mission.

“We saw a real need and said, ‘let’s do something more,’” Rachel said of the Zambia trip.

Gary said the third-world country has high rates of HIV and AIDS, unsanitary conditions, and no preventative care. “It’s like going into the past 50 or 100 years,” he said of its medical facilities. The hospitals are also unaffordable for most of the residents.

“They bury children daily,” Rachel said, noting that one in seven children die before the age of five.

In 2013, they returned to Zambia for a medical mission trip and treated about 200 patients each day.

Those trips led them to start planning to build a medical clinic there, and they began raising money for it. The Chaney's established a nongovernment organization (NGO) and a board of directors in Zambia so they would be accountable. Their funds go through a nonprofit organization, All God's Children ([allgodschildrenkc.com](http://allgodschildrenkc.com)).

*continued on next page*



## An eye-opening life changer: Gary '97 and Rachel Chaney

continued from pg. 27

Samaritan's Purse, a humanitarian aid organization, had helped Gary travel to Haiti after the 2010 earthquake, so he decided to reach out to that organization for assistance.

"We requested a list of supplies that filled about five pages double spaced, and Samaritan's Purse sent us a list of what they would ship to Zambia for us. It was 12 pages single spaced," he said.

However, a look at the supplies, worth about \$28,000, revealed that it was supplies for more than a clinic. So the Chaney family changed their plans and began to build a hospital: the Murundu Mission Hospital of Hope.

**"The hospital and land will be like a refuge where they can find hope."**

- Gary Chaney '97

The family returned to the United States in December 2016 for a couple of months to spread the word about their work and raise money to continue the project. They hope to have the first phase operational by January 2018.

The hospital will have 20 to 25 beds to start, a registration area, an emergency room, labor, delivery and postpartum rooms; an outpatient clinic, intensive care unit rooms, a lab, x-ray facilities, and a pharmacy. They also plan to add a surgery center in the future. All care will be free or for a minimal cost.

"It's bringing a lot of hope to the people," Rachel said. "They are excited."

And when it's completed, the Chaney family plan to turn hospital operations over to the local residents and return to the United States. Their goal is to have the hospital have half of its operational funds paid for by sustainable projects and the balance by donations. It is being built on 12 acres, so the Chaney family plan to help the locals grow farm crops on the extra land to sustain operations.



The Chaney family poses with friends in front of the hospital they are building in Zambia. They hope to have it operational in 2018.

"The hospital and land will be like a refuge," Gary said, "where they can find hope."

The family also holds Bible study groups and tries to help wherever they can. In the future, they would love to build a community center, staff housing, a clinic and a home for girls.

"I know why we ended up here," Gary says. "They need a lot of help."

The couple and their two children live in a small city and drive to many of the area villages. The family does have electricity, usually off for two to eight hours every day, and running water, only cold. Rachel homeschools the children.

"Until a person gets out of their comfort zone and goes to another country, you really can't open your eyes to see how they live, and how fortunate we are," Gary said. "It's guaranteed to change your life. When you come back, you will say, 'What can I do?'" ■

## Magazine survey results

Thank you to all who participated in our Missouri Western Magazine survey last year – a little over 400 were filled out. We appreciate your feedback and are working to make each issue better than the last. We have also tried to add more content online at [missouriwestern.edu/magazine](http://missouriwestern.edu/magazine).

The majority of people who said they read the magazine read almost all the sections, but news about campus departments and alumni were the most read. Here are some other results:



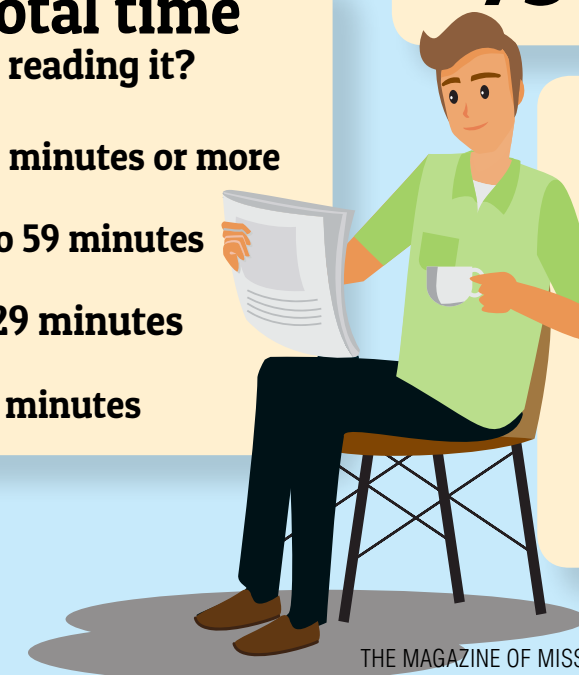
**241** read every issue,  
and **92** read most issues

**293** read all or most of it,  
**9** read none of it

**349** prefer the magazine in print  
**34** prefer the magazine online  
**73** prefer both in print & online

**How much total time  
do you spend reading it?**

**36** 60 minutes or more  
**146** 30 to 59 minutes  
**173** 10 to 29 minutes  
**43** 1 to 9 minutes



**How likely are you to  
read additional  
content online?**

**70** Very likely  
**259** Little or moderately likely  
**119** Not at all likely



## 1970s

**Missouri Rep. Pat Conway '73** was named one of 50 Missourians You Should Know by Ingram's Magazine, Kansas City's Business Magazine. Rep. Conway served as Buchanan County clerk for 28 years and was elected to the state Legislature in 2010.

**George Hayward '75** was inducted into the Missouri Sports Hall of Fame in January 2017. He was an official for the National Football League for 25 years. Over those years, he officiated 425 games, including the 2007 Super Bowl, four conference championships and four wild card games.

**Walter Wilson '76** joined Affordable Gas + Electric as a member of its energy consultant team. He is a former NFL and CFL player, signing contracts with the Kansas City Chiefs, Arizona Cardinals and Saskatchewan Roughriders. He also serves as a volunteer committee member with the St. Louis Sports Hall of Fame.

## 1980s

**Scott Wilhoit '84** was named senior vice president, global market access and patient services for Strongbridge Biopharma, a global commercial-stage biopharmaceutical company.

**Paul Rhoads '89** was named defensive coordinator for the University of Arkansas in Fayetteville. He had been serving as the Razorback's defensive backfield coach.

## 1990s



**Tammy Siegrist '91**, CPA, CGMA, was named a partner at MarksNelson, an accounting and consulting firm in Kansas City, Missouri. Siegrist joined MarksNelson in 2003. She is also co-vice president of finance for the American Business Women's Association.

**Dr. Duane Bruce '99** is the editor of the Journal for College Orientation and Transition, which is a publication for the National Orientation Directors Association.

## 2000s

**Mindy Kinnaman '01** is the director of student life at Front Range Community College in Westminster, Colorado.

**Dr. Jasmine Briedwell '03** received the PTA Outstanding Principal Award at the St. Joseph School District's PTA Founders Day in February. She is the principal at Lake Contrary Elementary School in St. Joseph.

**Elijah Haahr '05** was elected to serve as Speaker Pro Tem by the Missouri House of Representatives Republicans. Haahr is a member of the state Legislature, representing the 134th district, which includes Springfield. The Speaker Pro Tem is second in command in the Missouri House.

**Jon-Paul Bellamy '05** and his wife, Sarah, announce the birth of a daughter, Amelia Lee, born Sept. 1, 2016.

**Michael O'Neal '06** was named the Missouri Department of Corrections Board of Probation and Parole's regional employee of the month in July 2016. In addition to a normal probation caseload in Grundy County, O'Neal also supervises sex offenders, dangerous felons and domestic violence cases in Grundy, Harrison and Mercer counties.

**Nicolas '06 and Amanda (Gonzalez) '07 Thyfault** announce the birth of a son, Henry Robert Xavier, born Sept. 9, 2016. The couple also has daughter Catherine, 6, and son Alexander, 2.



**Ashley (Vernon) '07 and Drew '09 Hanna** announce the birth of a daughter, Madison Claire, born Dec. 14, 2016.

## 2010s

**Elena Castanada '10** was promoted to actuarial consultant at Aetna.

**Kristin Parker '10 and Alexander Sics** were married Nov. 12, 2016. The couple resides in Grand Rapids, Michigan.



**Nicole (Pickman) Pummel '10** and her husband, Spencer, announce the birth of a son, Maverick Edward, born Aug. 28, 2016.

**Melissa (Bledsoe) Boyd '11** graduated with a Master of Science in Family Studies-Youth Development from Kansas State University in December 2016.

**Molly Smith '11** participated in Miami University's Earth Expeditions global field course in Namibia in the summer of 2016 as part of her master's degree program from the university's Global Field Program.



**Check out this future Griffon's attire!**

**Mitch '13 and Bailee (Testorff) '13 Giger** announce the birth of a daughter, Jessa June, born Dec. 10, 2016.

**Beau Clinton '14** joined Clayton Paper & Distribution as the marketing director and an account manager.

**Jacob Scott '14** is chief of staff for Missouri State Sen. Bill Eigel, 23rd District. Scott had been serving as a legislative aide to State Sen. Robert Schaaf since 2014.

**Stephen Culver '15** and Chassie Hartman were married Sept. 24, 2016.

**LaQuinta Jefferson '16** signed a professional contract to play basketball for Gernika Bizkaia, a professional women's basketball team in Spain. At Missouri Western, she was the 2015-16 MIAA Player of the Year and scored over 1,000 points in her college career.

# Penguins up close and personal: Lauran West '16

If anyone asked Lauran West '16 as a child what her favorite animal was, she never hesitated, and her answer was always "penguins." So imagine her excitement when she was hired for a two-month internship at the Henry Doorly Zoo and Aquarium in Omaha, Nebraska to care for and feed the tuxedoed birds.

West, a biology major with a zoology concentration, landed that dream internship this past fall and loved every minute of it. Along with the penguins, she took care of the puffins,



murres, and toucans, helping with diet preparation, administering medications, cleaning exhibits, and feeding them. She also got to help build rookeries (nurseries) for the birds.

Not only do zookeepers take care of the animals' physical needs, West said, it's important to stimulate all their senses so they don't get bored in the exhibits. That means activities with laser pointers, music, bubbles, mirrors, bouncy balls, and painting (penguin Picassos, perhaps?).

"Being able to work directly with them has been one of

the most rewarding experiences of my life," West said of the penguins. "I enjoyed observing the animals up close and personal while studying their behaviors."

Her most valuable lesson of the internship, she says, was learning how a zoo operates. "There is a lot that goes into maintaining a zoo, and keeping the animals safe, healthy, and comfortable is its number-one priority."

West, from Wathena, Kansas, didn't come to Missouri Western knowing she wanted to work in a zoo, but when she seemed to be continually drawn to biology classes, she made up her mind.

"It was refreshing to be able to get out of the classroom and outside for field work, and I knew animals were always a passion of mine."

**"Being able to work directly with them has been one of the most rewarding experiences of my life."**

- Lauran West '16



West said a study away trip to Belize, which included a lot of snorkeling and studying ocean organisms, was the highlight of her college career.

She said she also appreciated the passion of her professors for their subjects. "They encouraged students to get excited about what they were learning, and they cared about students' successes."

West is currently an animal caretaker/performer at SeaWorld San Antonio in Texas.

Eventually, she says, she would like to travel to other countries to observe animals in their natural habitats and conduct studies about the impact of environmental changes on them.

But she'll always have Omaha. And the penguins. ■





## In Memory

We remember those who have passed away. If you want to include someone in this listing, please call (816) 271-5651, mail the information to Diane Holtz, Missouri Western State University, 4525 Downs Drive, St. Joseph, MO 64507, or email [holtz@missouriwestern.edu](mailto:holtz@missouriwestern.edu).

**Marion K. Agnew**, Atchison, Kansas, Dec. 18, 2016. Agnew worked as director of Educational Diagnostics for Missouri Western from 1998-2010.

**Lawrence Isaac Banks**, St. Joseph, Missouri, July 16, 2016. Banks was a security officer for Missouri Western 1970-1987. Cpl. Robert Bidding, a current Missouri Western police officer, said he had worked with Banks in the 1980s, and he was very well respected by students and employees. Banks, Cpl. Bidding said, was able to quickly defuse tense situations because he was so respected.

**Goldie Mae (Krumme) Casper**, Maysville, Missouri, Feb. 5, 2017. She worked at Missouri Western for 23 years.

**Jacqueline Coulter-Byrd '87**, St. Joseph, Missouri, Nov. 18, 2016.

**Clyde Lemuel Daniels, Jr. '79**, Gladstone, Missouri, Feb. 27, 2017.

**Jerome F. Downs '41**, San Francisco, Oct. 23, 2016. Downs received the Distinguished Alumni Award from Missouri Western in 1994.

**Audrey E. Dugan '77**, Kansas City, Missouri, Dec. 15, 2016.

**Lois E. Fox**, Chillicothe, Missouri, Nov. 28, 2016. Fox served as the Special Needs Coordinator from 1999-2004 at Missouri Western.

**Darlyne Garbe**, St. Joseph, Missouri, Nov. 27, 2016. Garbe worked in the Missouri Western library from 1980-1996.

**Curtis A. Grimm '73**, St. Joseph, Missouri, Nov. 25, 2016.

**Stephen J. Hall '75**, St. Joseph, Missouri, Feb. 3, 2017.

**Velva J. (Hampton) Hinderks**, Stewartville, Missouri, Feb. 9, 2017. Hinderks worked as a secretary for 20 years for Missouri Western's Department of Social Sciences, retiring in 1990.

**Loretta Hughes '05**, St. Joseph, Missouri, Nov. 1, 2016.

**Jean A. (Dittmore) Joyce '91**, Denton, Kansas, Feb. 12, 2017.

**Paul J. Kerner**, Savannah, Missouri, Dec. 19, 2016. Kerner was an employee in Missouri Western's physical plant when he passed away.

**Charlaine (Farrow) Key '62/'70**, St. Joseph, Missouri, March 8, 2017.

**Chad Klein '08**, Gower, Missouri, Dec. 1, 2016.

**Roger J. Kromko '72**, St. Joseph, Missouri, Feb. 8, 2017.

**Richard A. Lewin '53**, St. Joseph, Missouri, Dec. 5, 2016.

**Allan H. Lowenberg '69**, St. Joseph, Missouri, Nov. 17, 2016.

**Harold T. Maxwell '57**, Clive, Iowa, Aug. 28, 2016.

**Barbara S. Meredith '92**, St. Joseph, Missouri, Nov. 22, 2016.

**Earl Milton**, Carterville, Illinois, Feb. 25, 2017. Milton was vice president of financial planning and administration at Missouri Western 1989-2002.

**Candice N. Minear '09**, Kansas City, Missouri, Jan. 1, 2017.

**Clarence Elmer Olson, Jr. '52**, St. Joseph, Missouri, Feb. 4, 2017.

**Jimmy Lee Paden '75**, Dearborn, Missouri, Sept. 20, 2016.

**Marc E. Sill '01**, Clarksdale, Missouri, Dec. 2, 2016.

**Nina (France) Stevens '42**, Kansas City, Missouri, Oct. 6, 2016.

**Kristin L. Stockstill-Chitty '02**, Kansas City, Missouri, Jan. 28, 2017.

**John W. Sutton '81**, Highlands Ranch, Colorado, Dec. 10, 2016.

**Darryl C. Walters '78**, St. Joseph, Missouri, Sept. 6, 2016.

**Roger Keith White '85**, Montgomery Village, Maryland, Feb. 17, 2017.

**James D. Worley '76**, Ottawa, Kansas, March 3, 2017.

**Sharon K. Ziph '86**, St. Joseph, Missouri, Dec. 7, 2016.

## Looking back – student publications

Since renowned poet Nikki Giovanni served as a guest judge for the Mochila Review and visited last month to read her poetry on campus, we thought it would be fun to look back at the history of student publications, which have been a part of Missouri Western's curriculum from its earliest days.

The first publication, Penny Whistles, was published at the St. Joseph Junior College from 1920s until the mid-1950s. That was followed by Front Cover, which was published just one year, 1970.

After that was Icarus, first published during the 1971-72 academic year. It continued as an outlet for Missouri Western student work through the 1999 edition.

When Icarus editor John Gilgun retired in 1999, Ruth Ellen Kocher was hired as his replacement. She changed Icarus into a national publication, where it no longer published student work but accepted submissions from all over the country. In spring 2000, the first Icarus as a national publication was printed, and there was no longer any publication on campus for student work to be published.

Kocher left after one year and was replaced by Anna Leahy. Leahy decided to keep Icarus as a national publication, but change its name. A contest was held, and student Sue Ferguson submitted the winning entry, Mochila Review. That year, Leahy did allow a few Missouri Western students' works to be published in the Mochila Review, although it still accepted submissions nationally. Leahy stayed two years.

In 2002, Dr. Bill Church became editor of the Mochila Review. Church, who was a 1989 graduate of Missouri Western, said his first published piece as a student was in the Icarus, so he wanted to re-establish a campus publication for student work. Church continued the Mochila Review as a publishing venue for writers across the country and guided the creation of Canvas in the spring of 2004 for Missouri Western

work. Dr. Marianne Kunkel is now the advisor for Canvas and the editor of the Mochila Review.

Yearbooks began early on in Missouri Western's history, also. For the first five years of the St. Joseph Junior College, the students shared yearbook space with Central High School's Wakitan. The 1916 yearbook contained one photo of the junior college's first class, and subsequent years contained around a dozen or so junior college pages.

The first Griffon yearbook that was separate from Central High School's book was published in 1921 for the 1920-21 school year. It was dedicated to Lt. Walter Louis Pinger and Cecil Meyers, who "sacrificed their lives in the recent war." The first issue of the college newspaper, called the Spectator, was published in 1924. Six years later, the paper changed its name to Griffon News, which was the winning entry in a naming contest for students. ■







**Missouri Western State University**

4525 Downs Drive

St. Joseph, Missouri 64507

Non-Profit Organization  
U.S. Postage  
**PAID**  
Fulton, MO 65251  
Permit No. 38

## GriffsGiveBack campus cleanup day

Fifty students, employees (including Dr. Robert Vartabedian, Missouri Western's president) and alumni gathered on campus in February for a campus cleanup day, which was a kickoff event for the new campus initiative, GriffsGiveBack (see article on p. 21).

Student Brent Rosenauer, who started the initiative, said this was the first event he had ever planned, and he was pleased with the turnout. An unseasonably warm day made it possible for the volunteers to take their cleanup efforts outside.

"We have to do more and more and any volunteer work we can do, to better the world. You have to start local, and this is a good start," employee John Gregory said. "GriffsGiveBack is fantastic." ■

