

# Missouri *Western*

*The Magazine for Alumni and Friends • Spring 2004*





The Missouri Western Magazine  
is a publication of the Institutional  
Advancement Office for alumni and  
friends of Missouri Western State College  
and the St. Joseph Junior College.

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**Editor**

Diane Holtz

**Design Editor**

Kendy Jones

**Director of Public Relations and Marketing**

Kristy Hill

**Director of Alumni Services**

Julie Lawrence

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4525 Downs Drive, MC 106  
St. Joseph, MO 64507

(816) 271-5651 • email: holtz@mWSC.edu

Missouri Western State College is an equal opportunity institution.



## President's Perspective

Dear Alumni and Friends,

Western has traditionally been well regarded for its focus on students. Since our beginnings, faculty and staff have rightfully seen our primary mission as the learning and success of

students, both on campus and in their careers, lives, and communities after graduation. Our alumni are excellent testimony to the outcomes of Western's focus on students.

Today, Western continues and expands this tradition. In our strategic planning, we have rededicated ourselves to students as the center of what we do. And our commitment to students has received national recognition. (For a synopsis of the Strategic Plan, see story on Page 13.)

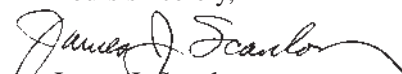
Western, for example, is among only 12 public colleges and universities in the nation chosen to participate in the Foundations of Excellence project focused on the success of first-year students. The project intends to identify best practices in working with first-year college students as a foundation for their success through graduation and beyond. It is sponsored by the American Association of State Colleges and Universities and the National Policy Center for the Study of the First Year of College.

Western has also been chosen to participate in a national Learning Communities initiative. This initiative centers on the academic and personal success of undergraduate students. It emphasizes the academic connections between the separate courses students are taking and the personal connections among the students who are taking these courses. The initiative is sponsored by the Pew Charitable Trust, and at this point officially includes some 20 colleges and universities across the country. (For more details about Foundations of Excellence and Learning Communities, see the feature story on Page 2.)

Finally, Western is participating in the "American Democracy Project" with about 200 other colleges and universities. The national project is focused on educating students as citizen scholars, encouraging them to develop a habit of involvement in civic life while they are students on campus and as alumni after they graduate. The Democracy Project is sponsored jointly by the American Association of State Colleges and Universities and The New York Times. In fact, Western has been listed with other participants in full-page recognitions in The Times on three occasions during the past year.

So it is that Western continues to be a first-rate, student-centered college. We have strengthened our commitment to students and to excellence in student outcomes. We are increasingly well known for the strength of our commitment and the quality of our results. The Western Magazine will provide you with additional information regarding our work with students and the outcomes of our work. I think that you will agree that our focus on students merits the recognition that we have begun to receive at the national level.

Yours sincerely,

  
James J. Scanlon

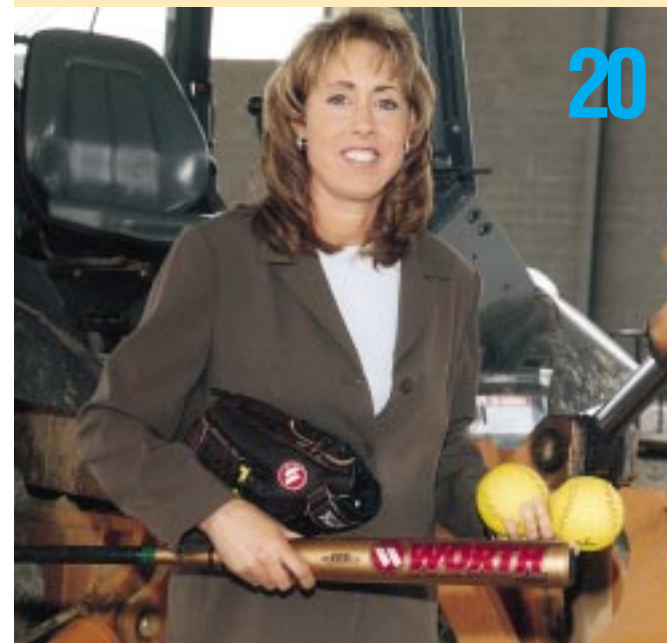
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Kelli Cline with her  
mother, Elizabeth  
Crotty, '82, in the  
foyer of the Leah  
Spratt Multipurpose  
Classroom Building



## Features

### 2 Alum recalls her freshman days as daughter enrolls

Elizabeth Crotty, '82, recalls how she adjusted to college as her daughter begins her freshman year over 20 years later. Western has several programs for first-year students, and the college recently gained national recognition for those programs.

### 10 Students discover golden opportunities at Western

Six students share how they have taken advantage of opportunities that have enhanced their college careers.

### 20 Alum's business is outstanding in its field

Cheri Kempf, '85, was an outstanding student athlete. She has used her talent and skills to create one of the most successful softball training facilities in the country.

## Alum recalls her

# FRESHMAN.DAYS

## as daughter enrolls

*Western receives national recognition for first-year focus*



*Kelli Kline works with Dr. Christa Adam, assistant professor of biology. Christa is the faculty coordinator of Kelli's Freshman Interest Group, one of the components of Western's Learning Communities.*

When Elizabeth (Williams) Crotty's daughter, Kelli Kline, announced her intention to enroll as a freshman at Western for the 2003 fall semester, Elizabeth, '82, hoped Kelli would have an easier adjustment to college than she did.

Transitioning from a high school class of 18 to a "huge" college 100 miles from home, Elizabeth said her first semester at Western was a big adjustment and "a whole new experience for a country girl."

Kelli, a graduate of St. Joseph's Bishop LeBlond High School, said she didn't have as difficult a transition from high school to college as her mother did. But since Elizabeth's college days, Western has developed several new programs to help freshmen adjust to college life.

In fact, Western's focus on first-year students like Kelli has recently brought national attention to the college.

In September, Western was one of only 12 colleges and universities in the nation, and the only one in Missouri, selected as a founding member of the **Foundations of Excellence Project**.

Over the next year, Western and others in this project will develop a blueprint of effective programs for freshmen and set the standard for first-year experiences.

Western is also one of 20 colleges and universities chosen to participate in a **National Learning Communities Project**, which focuses on student groups not only attending classes together, but also living together in a community setting.

"Research nationwide talks about the

challenge of making the transition from high school to college," said Dr. Judy Grimes, dean of student services. "For some students, it's huge. Anything we can do to get students involved early is important. We want them to have a successful experience."

Kelli took advantage of some of Western's programs for first-year students. As a member of a Freshmen Interest Group (FIG), she was introduced to community life. She also participated in an informative registration day and a three-day Griffon Edge orientation program.

Griffon Edge, held at the start of the semester, offers campus tours; workshops on topics such as finances, study skills and college expectations; a new student convocation; and a common book reading. Campus organizations and offices also set up displays and offer information on activities and resources available at Western.

Elizabeth recalled her orientation when she was a freshman. "All I remember from my registration and orientation was that the food was terrible," she said with a laugh.

Kelli's FIG, which introduces students to community life, was made up of 20 freshmen, including one of her high school friends. The group had three classes together the first semester.

"FIGs are good things. I think they make it a lot easier to get to know people," Kelli said.

FIGs like Kelli's are actually the foundation of Western's Learning Communities Project. The college's new residence hall, slated for completion in fall 2005, has also been designed with the Learning Communities Project in mind. Forty to 50 students will share space in areas of the residence hall, including living quarters, a study lounge and kitchen.

"Every square inch of the building living and programming space will maximize student learning with one another outside the classroom," said Dr. David Arnold, vice president for academic and student affairs, at the residence hall groundbreaking last fall. "The

building represents our future strategic direction for student life on campus."

Western's first-year programs also include College 101, a three-credit, semester-long seminar, and a freshmen assessment survey.

Kelli and fellow freshmen filled out the survey early in the first semester, then met with faculty and staff to discuss the results of the survey or talk about any concerns the new students may have had.

At the end of her first semester, Kelli said things were going well; she had gotten involved in a couple of organizations and was enjoying college life.

Elizabeth recalled that she had adjusted pretty well by the end of her first semester. She had met a lot of people, including a woman she still considers her best friend; she had become a better time manager; and she had learned the value of attending classes.

Now, years later, she says she's facing a big adjustment to college life again - this time as a parent. ■

## Nine freshmen receive Alumni Family Scholarships

Elizabeth Crotty, '82, informed her parents on the day of her high school graduation that she planned on enrolling at Western in the fall.

When her daughter, Kelli Kline, expressed an interest in attending Western, Elizabeth was happy to have more notice so Kelli could apply for scholarships.

The planning ahead paid off, because Kelli was one of nine recipients of this year's Alumni Family Scholarships, which are awarded to incoming freshmen who have at least one parent who is an alumnus. Kelli's father, Jeffrey, '82, is also an alumnus.

Other recipients included Christopher Colboch, son of David, '87, and Julie Colboch; Ian Cole, son of Richard, '76, and Dana, '83, Cole; Mary Elizabeth Earhart, daughter of Terry, '77, and Elizabeth, '68, Earhart; Jaynee Heumader, daughter of David, '78, and Suanne, '83, Heumader; Ross Scholz, son of David, '82, and Melissa, '82, Scholz; Kati Ussary, daughter of Paul and Sondra, '98, Ussary; Andrew Weddle, son of Tim and Kim, '00, Weddle; and Alex Wolford, son of Rudy and Nannette, '73, Wolford.

Applicants must have a 3.0 grade point average in high school and be involved in four extra-curricular activities. Applications may be picked up in Leah Spratt Multipurpose Classroom Building, room 106. To receive an application by mail, call (816) 271-5651. Deadline is June 15 each year.



## Computer Science, Mathematics and Physics Department receives \$294,200 grant

The Computer Science, Mathematics and Physics Department received a \$294,200 grant, the largest faculty grant award in college history.

The objective of the grant is to increase the number of underrepresented groups, such as minorities, women and nontraditional students, in the computer science and mathematics

**“I think it’s absolutely wonderful. The department saw a need and did what it took to fill it. Getting the grant is just another shining example of how good the faculty is at Western.”**

*- James Blevins, a nontraditional mathematics major*

fields by awarding scholarships to academically talented and financially needy students.

The grant is from the National Science Foundation’s Division of Undergraduate Education Computer Science, Engineering and Mathematics Scholarships program.

“I think it’s absolutely wonderful,” said James Blevins, a nontraditional mathematics major from St. Joseph and one of the recipients. “The department saw a need and did what it took to fill it. Getting the grant is just another shining example of how good the faculty is at Western.”

The four-year grant will provide up to 20 scholarships of \$3,125 per academic year for Western computer science or mathematics majors, and may be renewed up to a maximum of eight

semesters as long as the criteria are met. Fourteen were awarded this spring.

Dr. Sharon Vestal, assistant professor of mathematics and principal investigator of the grant, said the scholarship recipients will meet on a regular basis and host guest speakers, tour local industries, and have opportunities for internships at local businesses. The review board of the grant committee noted this as a major strength of the project.

Dr. Don Vestal, assistant professor of mathematics, assisted Sharon with the grant writing. Also assisting in the project were department faculty members Dr. Ken Lee, Kent Pickett and Deborah Becker. ■

## Citizen Scholars

Western is one of 146 institutions in the nation to join the American Democracy Project, a national initiative to increase the number of students who will be engaged in meaningful civic actions.

“Being a partner in the Project will enable Western to prepare its students better for active roles as citizens in the communities where they will live after graduation,” said President Dr. James Scanlon.

Western will initiate new projects, teaching strategies and extracurricular programs relevant to community involvement.

The participating colleges were recognized in the New York Times newspaper. ■



Western students participate in a team-building exercise at the Student Leadership Challenge last fall. Over 70 students participated in the weekend-long event.



Adrian Gray sings "Greased Lightning" in the Theatre Department's production of "Grease." The play was directed by Deny Staggs and Dr. Richard Bell was the music director. Three performances of the fall production were sold out.

## A call to action: Western seeks university status

Missouri legislators filed legislation this session for Western to obtain university status.

Western President Dr. James Scanlon noted that since the 1960s most states have changed the names of their public four-year colleges to universities because it recognizes that the future of the state requires an expanded mission for their campuses, including a mission at the graduate level.

“In the states with the fastest growing economies, the public four-year campuses are universities,” he said. “As universities, they have a greater impact on the economies of their communities, regions and states.”

The president said the college

currently has a profile similar to other universities in Missouri and across the nation.

“University designation is the right thing for Western and this area,” said Patt Lilly, St. Joseph Area Chamber of Commerce President and Regent. “As a university, Western can be a stronger asset in our efforts to attract new business and develop a workforce to meet those needs.”

Consider contacting your Missouri legislators to let them know you support legislation for Western to obtain university status. Their addresses can be found online at

[www.moga.state.mo.us](http://www.moga.state.mo.us). ■



## 2 + 2 + 2 equals opportunity

With the signing of 2+2+2 agreements between Western, Metropolitan Community Colleges in Kansas City and University of Missouri - Kansas City, earning a bachelor’s degree in education or business from Western became more convenient for Kansas City area residents.

The program offers students the opportunity to earn an associate degree at any of the Metropolitan Community Colleges. They may then earn a bachelor’s degree from Western by taking classes at the UMKC North campus at Metro North Mall in Kansas City.

Then, they may work on a master’s degree in education from UMKC at the same location. ■

## Residence Hall update

Groundbreaking was held in November and construction began shortly after on the new commons building and residence hall. The commons, slated to open this fall, will feature a lounge, coffee shop, convenience store and 24-hour service desk.

The 400-bed hall will offer semi-suite double and single rooms and learning community areas on each floor. It is scheduled to open in the fall of 2005. ■

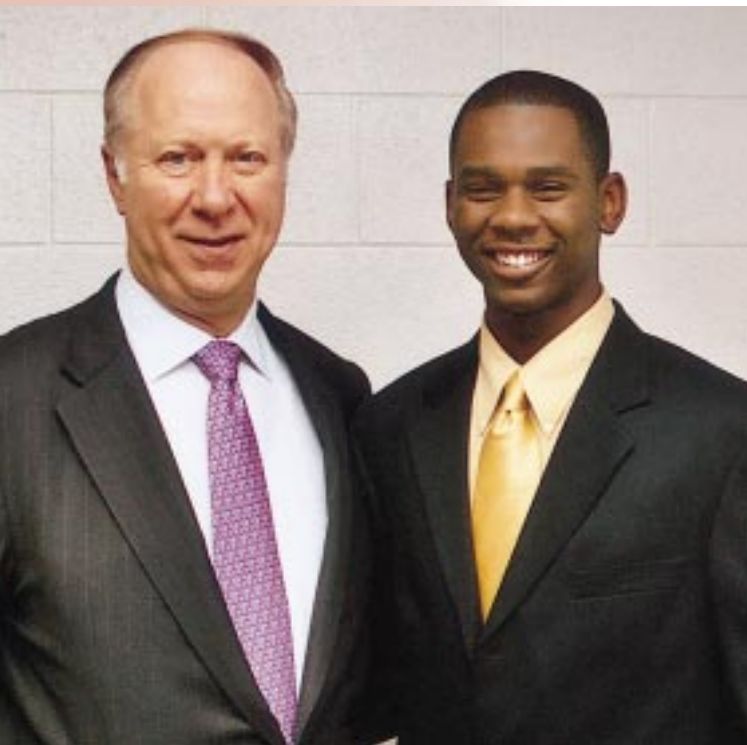


## Presidential Advisor David Gergen speaks at Convocation on Critical Issues

“Leaders are made not born,” said David Gergen, speaker for the 10th annual Convocation on Critical Issues last fall. His topic was “Eyewitness to Power: the Essence of Leadership.”

Drawing from his experiences as former adviser to Presidents Nixon, Ford, Reagan and Clinton, David emphasized the importance of three leadership characteristics: ambition, competence and character.

He said President Nixon was the “best strategist I’ve ever seen,” and President Clinton was a bright, curious, intelligent man who used 360-degree leadership, looking at everything around him.



Convocation speaker David Gergen visits with Sylvester Brandon, president of the Student Government Association.

David, professor of public service at the John F. Kennedy School of Government at Harvard University and director of its Center for Public Leadership, left the audience of 2,300 with the lesson that everyone is capable of becoming a leader. “You have within you the seed of leadership, and you should nurture it.”

The event was sponsored by the Western Foundation, Aquila, Aramark, Barnes and Noble, Citizen’s Bank and Trust, Commerce

Bank, Ellison Auxier Architects, Inc., Faultless Starch/Bon Ami Co., Heartland Health, Hillyard Companies, Lamar Advertising, Missouri American Water, Nodaway Valley Bank, Pepsi Cola Bottlers, St. Joseph Chamber of Commerce, St. Joseph News-Press, St. Joseph School District, Shughart Thompson Kilroy Watkins & Boulware, and US Bank. ■

## Play celebrates St. Joseph history

Don Lillie has a vision to increase tourism in St. Joseph. The assistant professor of communication studies and theatre wants to bring an annual professional summer production to Krug Park’s Amphitheater.

When he couldn’t find an appropriate play, he collaborated with composer Beth McClenaghan over three years to create a musical, “The Pony Express.”

“There’s one thing in this community that we can claim that no one else in the world can - the start of the Pony Express. Where is the celebration of that heritage?”

Don is currently promoting his play to professional touring companies, hoping to have it performed in Krug Park in 2005. ■

## Two serve as legislative interns

Ryan Sevcik and Tolu Aregbe were selected as interns in the state Legislature this semester.

Ryan, from Springfield, Mo., is an intern for State Sen. Charlie Shields.

Tolu, from St. Joseph, is serving as an intern for Rep. Ed Wildberger in the House of Representatives. ■

## Campus KUDOS

- **Dr. Dennis Rogers**, professor of music, received an American Society of Composers, Authors and Publishers award.
- Thirty-six students in the America READS program logged 7,183 hours as reading tutors for children at 11 sites in St. Joseph.
- **Dr. Robert Nulph**, associate professor of video art, earned three awards for his video, including a Bronze “Telly Award.”
- **Dr. Ken Rosenauer**, associate professor of English, was one of two in the nation to receive the College Media Advisers Hall of Fame award.
- **Dr. John Tapia**, professor of speech, received the Governor’s Award for Excellence in Teaching.
- **Tiffany Pierce**, ’03, and **Carol Roever**, associate professor of business, published a paper in the “Regional Business Review.”
- Student **Tyson Schank**, accompanied by **Denise Smith**, associate professor of business law, presented a paper at the annual meeting of the Academy of Legal Studies in Business in Nashville, Tenn.
- **Dr. Ann Thorne**, associate professor of journalism, was awarded the Four-Year Distinguished Yearbook Adviser award at the College Media Advisors national convention.
- Student **Michael Johnson** and **Victoria “Y” Wacek**, assistant professor of teacher education, were named “Drum Majors for Justice” at the Martin Luther King Jr. Luncheon on campus.
- The Sigma Tau chapter of the Phi Sigma Kappa Fraternity received the Herbert L. Brown Most Outstanding Chapter Award.
- The Zeta Tau chapter of the Sigma Sigma Sigma Sorority received a national award for having the #1 new member orientation program out of over 100 chapters.
- Psi Chi, the National Honor Society in psychology, received the Model Chapter Award from the national council.
- Western is the first four-year institution in Missouri to be accepted into the Academic Quality Improvement Program (AQIP). The program provides an alternative process through which an already accredited institution can maintain its accreditation. Through this process, Western will align its accreditation with the quality initiatives identified in its five-year Strategic Plan. ■



## Speaker transports audience back in time to 1819

Although Peter, one of the members of the Lewis and Clark Expedition, was “blind in one eye and couldn’t see very well out of the other,” he was a valuable part of the group because he could play the fiddle, according to Dr. William Worley, featured speaker at Western’s Eggs and Issues last fall.

William, a historian, writer and member of the adjunct faculty of the University of Missouri - Kansas City, transported audience members back in time to 1819 as he portrayed Captain William Clark in full military regalia and spoke of his experiences on the Expedition.

“The fellers liked to have a dram of whiskey of an evening and listen to Peter play his fiddle,” he said. “Whiskey’s real important if you’re recruiting fellers on a trip where they don’t know where they are going.”

The Eggs and Issues speaker series is sponsored by Heartland Regional Community Foundation, Leaverton’s, UMB Bank, NA; and the Western Foundation. This presentation was also funded by the Missouri Humanities Council with support from the National Endowment for the Humanities. ■



## KC Mayor speaks at Commencement

Approximately 270 students participated in the Winter Commencement ceremony Dec. 20 at the M.O. Looney Fieldhouse. Three hundred fifty-three summer and fall graduates were eligible to participate.

Kansas City Mayor Kay Barnes, a native of St. Joseph, was the featured speaker. She was also awarded an honorary doctorate from Dr. James Scanlon, Western's president. ■



Freshman Meghan Ballou of Kansas City, Mo. helps her niece McKady Kellam over the inflatable obstacle course at Western's annual Family Day last fall. The 2004 Family Day will be September 18.

## Community supports Pass the Power

Since 1988, Pass the Power has been committed to teaching adults in the St. Joseph area to read. The program has been so successful that community support for it has expanded in recent months.

In the past year, several area businesses and organizations have committed their financial support to the program and a steering committee was formed with broad-based community representation.

Pass the Power trains community volunteers to provide one-on-one tutoring to adults reading at a fourth-grade reading level or below. Along with basic literacy, tutors also teach GED skills, English as a Second Language and basic math skills.

All services are confidential and at no cost to the student.

Supporters of Pass the Power include Buchanan County; the City of St. Joseph; Hastings; Mead Westvaco; St. Joseph News-Press; St. Joseph School District; United Way; US Bank, Trustee, Messick Charitable Trust; Wal-Mart; and the Western Foundation. ■

## Dean named chair of St. Joseph Chamber board

Dr. Jeanne Daffron, '75, dean of professional studies, was named chair of the St. Joseph Area Chamber of Commerce board of directors for 2004, the first educator to hold the position.

Jeanne, who has served Western since 1977, took over the reins at the Chamber's annual banquet in January.

"The world is so integrated that there's no fine line between education and business anymore," she said. "Business counts on education to provide a strong workforce, and students have to understand the demands that business will place on them." ■

## Western offers research institutes

Several students at Western took advantage of opportunities to research with faculty members last summer.

In one research institute, high school students joined faculty members and college students in seven long-term, in-depth research projects in a variety of disciplines.

Ten faculty members and students also engaged in research throughout the summer in projects ranging from interfaith marriages to the effects of anti-tumor drugs on cancer.

Each group presented their research to the public. ■

## Football team has great season

The 2003 football season was arguably the best season in school history. Western went 9-3 overall, setting a school record for most wins in a season.

The team won its first-ever conference title in football, going 7-2 in the Mid-America Intercollegiate Athletics Association (MIAA). Western beat Concordia-St. Paul 24-14 in the 2003 Mineral Water Bowl in Excelsior Springs, Mo. and the Griffons were the only team in the MIAA to win all of their home games in 2003. For their efforts on the gridiron, Western had 11 players earn All-MIAA accolades and three earn All-Midwest Region honors.

Pierre Thomas became the most decorated football player in Western's NCAA history, setting the NCAA Division II record for interceptions in a season with 14 and the Western career interception record with 23. He also broke the NCAA Division II mark for interception return yards with 362.

Thanks to those fans who came out to cheer on the Griffons - attendance average was 3,817 per game. ■

## Join us for golf!

Western Athletics will host two golf tournaments this summer and you are invited! The First Horizon/Western Celebrity Golf Classic is June 25 and the Family & Friends Golf Tournament will be July 31. Both will be held at the Fairview Golf Course in St. Joseph.

The June tourney will feature sport celebrities, and at the July event you'll have the opportunity to join Western letterwinners, alumni and boosters in a round of golf. Get your four-person team together now and contact Dave Lau at (816) 271-5926. ■



Read about the six newest members of the Athletic Hall of Fame - Page 21.



www.  
**GoGriffons**  
.com

Check out the Griffon's official website!

The site includes scores, news, schedules, and upcoming events. If you are a former athlete, fill out the Letterwinner Form at the site so you can be included in alumni events with fellow teammates in your sport!

## Volleyball team has winning season

The Griffon volleyball team went 15-13 overall this season. They started the season strong, getting to the 5-0 mark before injuries and a tough MIAA slate took its toll. The win over Pittsburg State was a memorable one, handing the Gorillas their first loss of the season and breaking their 16-game winning streak.

Four Griffons earned All-MIAA honors in 2003. ■

May is Gold Coat Drive Month! Help support Griffon Athletics and join the fun!



# Students discover

# golden opportunities at Western

In the heart of the Midwest, students are discovering gold at Western because they are taking advantage of the opportunities offered to broaden their college experiences outside the classroom.

Applied learning, co-curricular opportunities, leadership development and community service have become some of the major focuses of the college's recent five-year Strategic Plan (see p. 13).

Six students share how they have discovered gold at Western because of these focuses, and they talk about what it has meant to them.

## Hands-on experience is invaluable

*"In class you learn the definitions, but you learn so much more experiencing it, and you remember it."*

- Clint Williams,

learn the definitions, but you learn so much more experiencing it, and you remember it."

**Clint Williams**, '03, said he learned a lot in his accounting classes at Western, but it couldn't compare to the experience he gained through his internship at a local accounting firm.

He especially realized that when he accompanied his supervisor on a client's audit during the same semester he happened to be enrolled in an auditing class. "In class you



Clint Williams

Clint, from Utica, Mo., believes the internship requirement for his business degree was instrumental in landing a full-time job at the firm after he graduated in December. "It's pretty hard to find a job if you don't have experience. The internship helped so much."

**Nate Ferguson**, '03, gained more experience than he expected when he began his internship at The Vineyards restaurant in Weston, Mo. The accounting and finance double major from Port Orchard, Wash. began as an accountant for the restaurant, but soon added hours as a food server. Since last May Nate has been working 30 to 40 hours a week, splitting his time between serving and accounting.

"It was the first time I had ever been a food server. From that experience I learned that I liked being around people and helping people."

Nate said it helped him decide to choose a career that focuses on interacting with customers and clients.

He said the accounting experience has been invaluable, too. Nate does a lot of the accounting projects for the restaurant at his home, which he said has helped him become a better time manager. "It also enhanced

my problem-solving and analytical skills, and it enhanced the accounting and finance skills I learned in the classroom."



Nate Ferguson

my problem-solving and analytical skills, and it enhanced the accounting and finance skills I learned in the classroom."

For his first project as an intern, the restaurant owner handed him a box of invoices and asked him to create a spreadsheet organizing the restaurant's inventory, which included thousands of items.

"Every interview I've had, they have asked me about my work at The Vineyards," Nate said. "It ended up being a great experience."

## Leadership opportunities are plentiful



LaShaundra Randolph

**LaShaundra Randolph**, '03, and **Sylvester Brandon**, senior, believe some of their best experiences at Western involved their roles as student leaders.

LaShaundra, from Chicago, spent last semester as the leadership intern for the college's Center for Multicultural Education and called it one of the most difficult but best experiences she had at Western.

As the leadership intern, she coordinated the Student Government Association leadership retreat and served as a mentor for a freshmen leadership council.

"You have to learn to work with different people. Everyone has ideas - somehow you have to get together to make it work out."

She believes the staff and administration at Western have been supportive of her efforts, and encouraged her to aim high. "A lot of administrators not only focus on school work but on the whole person," she said. "It's not just about school."

LaShaundra, a criminal justice/juvenile

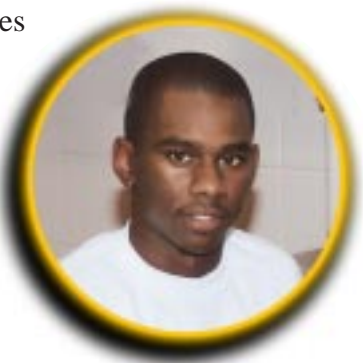
delinquency major, said she hopes to return to work at Western after she earns a master's in higher education administration and leadership.

"Missouri Western is more than just a college. It's an experience."

Sylvester, from St. Louis, said when he transferred to Western as a sophomore he hadn't planned on getting involved in any activities. But after joining the Campus Activities Board, he realized how much he liked it and became more and more involved in co-curricular activities. Last year he was elected president of the Student Government Association.

Sylvester, a speech communication/video production major, credits not only fellow students for getting him involved, but the administrators, also. "The biggest thing that helped me learn how to be a better leader was watching key leaders on campus," he said. "A lot of administrators took me under their wing, coaching me, showing me how things should be done."

He believes his leadership experiences have enhanced his college career. "I had options of 100 doors and no matter which one I chose, I had the opportunity to be successful. I love the Griffons. I bleed black and gold."



Sylvester Brandon

*"I had options of 100 doors and no matter which one I chose, I had the opportunity to be successful. I love the Griffons. I bleed black and gold."*

- Sylvester Brandon, Western Student



continued

## Intern relishes community service

Angie Smith

**A**ngie Smith, senior, was performing volunteer work for the Center for Multicultural Education even before she became their community service/service learning intern two years ago. In that position, she coordinates a number of college service projects and encourages her fellow students to help out in the community.

The business management major organized students for two Big Events, where volunteers spent the morning working at over 20 service organizations in the community. She also invited at-risk middle school and high school students to a football game and pizza party, pairing each with a student mentor.

The Kansas City native said she is very happy at Western because of the

opportunities she's had for hands-on experiences. "A lot of my friends went to bigger colleges and they didn't get the chances for experience. I've had a lot better leadership roles here."

She believes Western's focus on building Citizen Scholars is a great thing. "Combining classroom learning with community service

*"A lot of my friends went to bigger colleges and they didn't get the chances for experience. I've had a lot better leadership roles here. Combining classroom learning with community service makes you successful."*

- Angie Smith, Western Student

makes you successful."

## Student gets involved in co-curricular activities

**W**hen Kristen Neeley, junior, attended the Griffon Edge orientation program at Western as a freshman, she immediately decided she wanted to be an orientation leader and set about finding out how to become one. That commitment led to a college career of becoming involved in a variety of activities and organizations.

The marketing major from Brookfield, Mo. said Western staff has been very supportive and has encouraged her and other students to join organizations and become involved. "Staff encourage you to come to things - they won't take no for an answer," she said with a laugh.

Two of Kristen's favorite co-curricular commitments are welcoming new and prospective students to campus as a Griffon Edge leader and a Western VIP for Admissions. "Younger students now come to me for advice. They remember me from the Griffon Edge or their campus tour," she said. "That's touching."

She noted that Western is just the right size for getting involved. It is big enough to offer a lot of options, but small enough that everyone



Kristen Neeley

*"I just love this college. I'm amazed at how many people are so happy they came to this school."*

- Kristen Neeley,

who wants to can become active. "I just love

# Strategic Plan enters second year

**T**wo years ago, Western embarked on a campus- and community-wide effort that led to the creation of new mission, vision and values statements and a five-year strategic plan.

"Strategic planning enables us to recognize our strengths, our challenges and our opportunities for development -- and to chart our future," said Dr. James Scanlon, Western's president. The students, like those featured on the previous pages, are beginning to reap the benefits of the strategic planning implementation.

### The plan embraces seven goals:

- **Applied Learning and Student Development** focuses on offering all students the opportunity to apply what they have learned through internships or practical experience and co-curricular activities. Last year, approximately 75 percent of students participated in such an experience.

- **Community Service, Partnerships and Workforce Development** goals include increasing student participation in community service projects and providing leadership for projects and programs that enhance the lives of people in the larger community.

- **Academic Affairs and Enrollment Management's** goals include increasing the number of transfer students, strengthening retention and graduation rates, strengthening existing and developing new academic programs, and developing a diverse mix of students with academic potential for completing high-quality programs.

- **Image and Advancement** focuses on enhancing the college image and strengthening the support of Western. A long-range marketing plan is being developed. The Western Foundation and Alumni Association are also developing long-range plans as part of this goal.

- **Information Technology's** goal is to continue to upgrade the current campus technology and provide efficient technology support services.

- **Facilities and Grounds** goals address future needs for construction and maintenance and ways in which facilities and grounds may enhance teaching and learning.

- **Planning and Budgeting** committees evaluate the current administrative structure and resources to ensure effective use of resources. Western ranks among the highest among four-year institutions in the state on the percentage of its budget spent on instruction and support of students.

"In building our future as a learning community, we are committed to high-quality results for our students, to the academic and personal success of students on campus and beyond campus," said Dr. Scanlon. "We expect to set the standard for excellence in student development and community leadership."

**To view the entire plan, check it out online at [www.mwsc.edu](http://www.mwsc.edu) and click on "Discover the Western Advantage."** ■







Julie Lawrence  
Director of Alumni Services

## Director's Voice

strategic plan. One of the areas of emphasis was to create more services for alumni to stay connected with Western.

This past year, Western held 20- and 30-year class reunions, bringing alumni back to the college from coast to coast. The Association also coordinated with Griffon athletic staff to promote the alumni tailgate parties that were held before each home football game. In addition to those events, the Alumni Association is planning the Junior College Brunch in April and a summer social event for local alumni.

In order to expand our alumni relations outside of the local region, Institutional Advancement is facilitating the production of a 2004 Alumni Directory with Harris

Publishing Company. This project will not only assist Western in maintaining current records for each alumnus, but it will also allow alumni to find out the successes of former classmates. **Watch your mail for a short survey to update your information for the directory!**

The Alumni Association is committed to its alumni as well as Western's current students. Through the generosity of its members, the Association provides scholarships to students as well as a recognition event for graduates.

The Alumni Association is dedicated to cultivating alumni and maintaining a nourishing relationship with our students beyond graduation because you are a student for a short time, but an alumnus for life! ■

What does alumni really mean? The word alumnus is derived from the Latin word *alere* meaning "to nourish" or literally, "nourished one." Each student at Western is provided many nourishing opportunities through leadership activities and community involvement. Western strives to continue that sustenance when students become alumni.

In recent months, the Alumni Association has been energetically working to strengthen the bond with Western alumni. Last year, the Board worked with Institutional Advancement staff to create a long-range plan to coincide with the college's

### You are invited!

All alumni are welcome to attend the Alumni Association's annual meeting Thursday, April 8 in the Nelle Blum Student Union, room 218, to elect new members. A reception will begin at 5 p.m., followed by a 6 p.m. meeting.

For more information, contact Director of Alumni Services Julie Lawrence, (816) 271-5650 or [lawrence@mWSC.edu](mailto:lawrence@mWSC.edu).



The Alumni Association Board held a potluck to kick off the meeting year last fall. Pictured are members Larry Andrews, '73, and Peggy Iffert and Herb Iffert, '35.

## From the Alumni Association President

Dear Friends,

I have been president of the Alumni Association Board of Directors for almost a year. In that position, I have enjoyed working with Julie Lawrence, our new director of alumni services, and the board to continue to improve the Alumni Association. In Julie's column on the previous page, she talks about some of the work we have accomplished and our plans for the future.

One thing that I have come to appreciate since I have been president is the strong commitment from both the Alumni Board and the Alumni Office to provide scholarships for students. Each year, the Alumni Association commits a large portion of its budget to support students.

At the annual Awards Banquet in October, we honored 24 students who had received scholarships totaling \$23,500 for this academic year. It was a great opportunity for alumni to visit with the students and hear how much they had benefited from the scholarships.

With your help, we can continue to offer scholarships for our future alumni. The need is great and the students are very appreciative when they receive the scholarships. We are in the final stages of our annual Telefund, which supports student scholarship and alumni activities. If you did not have an opportunity to contribute to the Telefund, please consider returning a donation in the envelope inserted in this issue. Thanks in advance for your help!

Ralph Schank



Ralph Schank

## Alumni Association scholarships awarded

Twenty-four students were awarded \$23,500 in Alumni Association scholarships for the 2003-2004 academic year to help cover the costs of tuition, books and related expenses.

Nine students who have at least one parent who is an alumnus received Alumni Family scholarships; they are listed on Page 3.

The 15 Association scholarship recipients included Kelsey Pugh, psychology; Stacy Tibbles, elementary education; Susan Locke, special education; Lucas Davis,

history, secondary education; Brian Pearl, computer science; Kristine Ruegge, wildlife conservation; Mandy Fultz, business administration; Shandra McCreery, theatre; Randi Pickerel, business administration; Nicholas Rippey, criminal justice; Ryan Sprague, criminal justice; Latasha Thaxton, criminal justice and juvenile delinquency; Tanya Wharton, middle school education; Shannon Swanson, design; and Lindsay Hutchcraft, marketing. ■



Alumni Association Board members Kim Sigrist, '94, and Mary Bish, '87, sell alumni t-shirts at the 2003 Winter Commencement reception. T-shirts are available in the Alumni Services Office for \$15.

## Four alumni and biology professor recognized for accomplishments

Four alumni and one faculty member received Distinguished Alumni and Faculty Awards at the Awards



Patrick Conway  
Class of '93



Dan Danford  
Class of '78

Banquet Homecoming weekend. They also rode in the parade on Saturday, and were recognized during halftime at the game.

The 2003 alumni award recipients were Patrick Conway, '93, Dan Danford, '78, Molly Pierce, '77, and Jeanne Webb, '71. Dr. Todd Eckdahl, professor of biology, received the distinguished faculty award.

**Patrick Conway**, the chair of the 1972 Homecoming weekend, attended the St. Joseph Junior College from 1965-1968 and Western from 1970-1973. He earned his bachelor of science degree in history and has served as the Buchanan County clerk since 1982.

Patrick serves on several

boards, including the Family Guidance Board of Directors, the Missouri Association of Counties Board of Directors and the National Association of Counties Board of Directors. He has also been involved in recruiting new businesses to the St. Joseph area.

"To see the transition of junior college to a full four-year college and to see the growth of the institution to this day has been quite amazing," said Patrick.

**Dan Danford** said he learned a lot as a college student at Western, but the best thing he learned was the phone number of fellow student Chris Kellen, who became his wife.

Dan graduated with a bachelor's degree in marketing and earned an MBA from Northwest Missouri State University, Maryville. He has started two investment firms, and is currently an independent Registered Investment Advisor for the Family Investment Center.

He is the author of "Million Dollar Management" and "Simple Handbook for Church Marketing," and has written over 100 articles for trade journals, magazines and newspapers. Dan frequently serves as an adjunct faculty member at Western, and has

made presentations at several conferences.

He has been an officer or board member of several local nonprofit organizations, and has served as the president of the college's Alumni Association.

**Molly Pierce** has toured schools in over 30 countries on four continents, and was recently awarded a Fulbright scholarship to visit Argentina.

Molly graduated with a bachelor of science in elementary education and earned her master's in education at Northwest Missouri State University. She is currently a doctoral candidate at the University of Missouri - Columbia. Molly has served in the St. Joseph School District since 1977, and has been the principal at Coleman Elementary School in St. Joseph for 10 years.

She serves on both the national and state Associations for Elementary School Principals and several professional boards. She has been a member of the Foundation Board of Directors and Alumni Association Board, where she served a term as president.

From her days as a first-year kindergarten teacher in Rushville, Mo., to her current

position as a college instructor, **Jeanne Webb** has followed her dream and has been dedicated to her profession of early childhood education.

Jeanne graduated with a bachelor of science in elementary education and earned her master's from the University of Nebraska - Lincoln. She is an early childhood education instructor and the campus childcare center director at Central Community College in Grand Island, Neb.

Jeanne coordinates the Heads Up! Reading site for Grand Island, and serves on the south central and north central Nebraska Early Childhood Coalitions. She has served on many professional and community boards, including a state advisory committee for early childhood staff. For many years, she has served on the committee that provides in-service training for child care providers in the area.



Molly Pierce  
Class of '77



Jeanne Webb  
Class of '71



Dr. Todd Eckdahl  
Professor of Biology

**Dr. Todd Eckdahl**, professor of biology, has taught at Western for 10 years. He has published 13 research articles, several with student co-authors. He has made presentations on topics such as DNA and the human genome throughout the United States, and over 64 included students.

Since he has been at Western, Todd has received five federal grants totaling over \$330,000 to support research and teaching.

Todd earned a bachelor of science in chemistry from the University of Minnesota, Duluth, and his doctorate in molecular genetics from Purdue University in Lafayette, Ind.

"My professional record reflects a focus on biology teaching and scholarship," said Todd. "I revel in the fact that my job is about helping students to succeed. My best experiences at Western are those that involve student achievement." ■

## Nominations sought for Distinguished Service Awards

The Alumni Services Office accepts nominations for the Distinguished Alumni and Faculty Awards year round. The deadline each year is June 30.

Persons may nominate someone online at [www.mwsc.edu/alumni/](http://www.mwsc.edu/alumni/), click on "Distinguished Service Award," or call (816) 271-5651 for an application.

The criteria for the alumni award include professional achievement and distinction; service to the community, state or nation; humanitarian contribution to society in general; and possession of those qualities that elicit pride from others who attended the same educational institution. Living alumni who graduated at least five years ago are eligible.

The criteria for the faculty award include teaching excellence, availability to students, professional accomplishments, potential lasting influence on students and professional and ethical standards. ■



## Western names new Development Director

**J**erry E. Pickman, '85, was hired as Western's new director of development Jan. 29.

"I am very excited. I've experienced the quality of education and the learning environment at Missouri Western," said Jerry. "I know how important this college is to the community and the region and to future students."

Jerry earned a bachelor of science degree in criminal justice from Western and an Executive Master of Business Administration from Benedictine College in Atchison, Kan. in 2001.

Before joining Western, he was the development director at Benedictine. He also worked as a customer service manager for Atchison Products, Inc. Jerry worked for nine years at the Saint Francis Academy in Atchison, his last position as executive director.

He and his wife Shannon and their three children reside in Atchison.

"Development is about creating and maintaining relationships with people," he said. "I create the opportunities for people to give to something they feel is significant."



*Jerry E. Pickman  
Director of Development*

Jerry noted that the college has made significant progress since he graduated and that he is impressed with the administration's leadership. "It's a great college. I'm ready to jump in with both feet and get moving." Welcome, Jerry! ■

## Western loses two benefactors - Sheridan Logan and Barbara Leaverton

**W**estern and the St. Joseph community lost two great supporters last fall.

Sheridan Logan died Nov. 7, one month short of his 103rd birthday, and Barbara Leaverton, 86, died Nov. 18.

**"Their gifts through the years represent the outstanding support that our students receive from dedicated members of the St. Joseph community."**

*- Dr. James Roever, executive director of the Foundation*

"Western is grateful for the generosity of Barbara Leaverton and Sheridan Logan," said Dr. James Roever, executive director of the Foundation. "Their gifts through the years represent

the outstanding support that our students receive from dedicated members of the St. Joseph community. Each played an important part in the growth of Western."

A native of St. Joseph, Sheridan earned a bachelor's degree from Harvard University in 1923 and worked for the First National Bank of New York City until he retired and moved back to St. Joseph in 1965.

Sheridan and his brother, Col. Thomas Ashton Logan, established the John Sublett Logan Business Fellowship Program at Western in honor of their father. The program is

for graduates pursuing a master's degree.

Sheridan also funded Aspirations Inc., a program to prepare students for graduate study in the fields of business, law, accounting or economics; and the college's Small Business Institute.

Born in Rochester, Ind., Barbara was a lifelong resident of St. Joseph. She and her husband, William, owned and operated Leaverton Auto Supply.

Barbara supported the Eggs and Issues speakers series, the Convocation on Critical Issues and the Western Ambassadors' Night at the Ritz.

In 1995, Leaverton Residence Hall was named in honor of the Leaverton family. ■

## Former nontraditional student establishes \$10,000 endowed scholarship fund

**H**elen Creal, '57, enrolled in college for the first time at age 44, earned her degree, and enjoyed teaching for 22 years.

In an effort to offer other nontraditional students the same opportunity, Helen recently donated \$10,000 to the Foundation to establish the John S. and Helen Freda Creal Education Scholarship for students interested in the education field.

"I always wanted to be a teacher," Helen said. "When my youngest started high school, I could see an empty nest coming on. I decided I better go to school."

Her husband John, now deceased, was a 1929 graduate of the Junior College.

Helen said she had many great experiences as a student at Western, although she was the only nontraditional student in most of her classes.

At first she wanted to offer the scholarship to upper-classmen only, but she decided some students may need the extra support to help them get started. So the scholarship is for students at any level of their college career.

Helen, age 92, said she sent letters last Christmas to her two living children, 13 grandchildren, 36 great-grandchildren and eight great-great-grandchildren, requesting



*Helen Creal donated \$10,000 to establish a scholarship.*

that they donate to her endowed scholarship instead of "buying things for me that I put on the closet shelf."

Helen said she hopes her scholarship will help a student who may not return to college without it. "It (college) adds so much to your life. You don't realize how much." ■

## Fund helps students excel

**"A**tending the convention was one of the most practical learning experiences I have had during my time at Missouri Western," said student Rebekah Allen. She was one of the recipients of a grant this year from the Student Excellence Fund, which is supported by Foundation donors.

The Fund provides opportunities for students to participate in activities that complement classroom learning, such as attending or presenting papers at conferences. Students this year attended and presented at conferences from San Francisco to Burlington, Vt. ■

**Wondering how to support the Western Foundation? Check out [www.mwsc.edu](http://www.mwsc.edu), click on "Foundation and Alumni," then "Ways to Give" under "Foundation."**

## Foundation elects new members and officers

**E**ight community members were recently elected to the Western Foundation Board for six-year terms and new officers were elected for one-year terms. Board members are Dr. Michelle Cebulko, '93, pediatrician at Lakeside Pediatrics; Stephen Cotter, '78, Air Guard Commander; Karen Graves, former mayor of Salina, Kan., and an avid community volunteer in St. Joseph; Judith Hausman, Certified Public Accountant; Vern Middleton, president of Citizens Bank & Trust; Lee Sawyer, general manager of the St. Joseph News-Press; Kevin Schinze, president and CEO of Phoenix Scientific, Inc.; and Loah Stallard, executive director of the Social Welfare Board.

The officers are Stan Hall, president; Emil Sechter, vice president; George Richmond, secretary; and Dick Rochambeau, treasurer. ■

# Alum's business is outstanding in its field

**A**s a student at Western, Cheri Kempf, '85, was an English major and a stand-out athlete, but it always bothered her when people assumed she was going to be a coach after she graduated. "I wanted to be a writer," she said.

Today, however, Cheri is well known throughout the country for her athletic skills and expertise. Since graduating from Western, she has been a Division I softball coach, a finalist for the 1996 Olympic softball team, an inventor of a softball training device, a professional softball player and a pitching instructor.

For the past 13 years, Cheri has run one of the most successful clubs for private softball instruction in the country. Her business, Worth Club K, teaches all aspects of softball to girls ages five through 25, both at Nashville, Tenn., and at satellite locations in four states. Currently, the club offers private lessons to 1,200 girls in addition to the 400 to 500 who attend summer softball camps.

Each year Cheri hosts a College Expo, an opportunity for coaches to observe the athletes



Cheri Kempf, '85, speaks at Worth Club K, her softball training facility in Nashville.

in action. "For 13 years, 100 percent of those high school seniors who wanted to, signed scholarships for college," she said.

Kim Dunlap was one of Cheri's first students and is now a pitching instructor at Club K. "I would not be where I am today if it weren't for her," Kim said of Cheri. "She put her name on the line for me because when I signed my scholarship, the coach had never seen me play in a game. I think that says a lot for Cheri and for the reputation she has in our industry."

According to Cheri, not compromising on instruction is the most important aspect of the business. She said there are a lot of great athletes who are not able to translate their skills into instructing, and that there is a huge difference between being an athlete and teaching.

"We really try to teach and not just tell about our athletic experiences. We have to stay on the cutting edge of research."

Her commitment to quality instruction has carried over into a recent addition to the business: instructor training. She travels throughout the country from October to March operating clinics for coaches.

Last August, Cheri, a 2000 inductee into the

Cheri Kempf, '85, poses with her staff at the groundbreaking ceremony for her new softball training facility. The facility opened last August.



Western Athletic Hall of Fame, opened the doors of a new state-of-the-art training facility in Nashville, making it one of the nation's largest.

Two features of the new facility are Cheri's innovations: the Spin Right Spinner, a training tool for pitching and overhand throwing, and RIPS, a three-on-three indoor game played in a 30' x 70' enclosed area.

"RIPS was invented to help hitters understand where the optimal places to hit a ball would be, as well as to allow indoor competitive play in an organized environment," she said.

Doreen Denmon, who was the first employee Cheri hired, has enjoyed seeing the business blossom. "I've been in the middle of it, and it's still amazing to me. In this area, and probably in

the nation, there is not another individual who has done more for women's softball than Cheri."

As a student at Western, Cheri played both basketball and softball and was a member of Western's 1982 national champion softball team. She was named the national tournament's Most Valuable Player with a tournament earned run average of 0.000.



Photo from Griffon Yearbook

Cheri Kempf, pitching for Western in 1984

"I was in the right place size-wise," Cheri said of her college days. "I was comfortable. The college gave complete and equal support no matter what you were playing. I didn't know inequality (between men's and women's sports) existed until I was past college."

After college, she coached women's softball at Austin Peay State University in Clarksville, Tenn. for four years and played for the Raybestos Brakettes, a national championship professional softball team.

After leaving Austin Peay, someone suggested Cheri start giving pitching instructions, and that was the start of her new career.

Ten girls answered the newspaper ad for her first eight-week training session, and for a year,

Cheri travelled around to church and school gyms before she leased a 5,500 square-foot space. Within two years, she had 325 students.

Today, 13 years later, her teaching schedule has been reduced as her business grows. "I love the business part. The challenge of the business inspires me. I enjoy seeing it grow and figuring out how to make it successful."

She is now considering opening Worth Club K facilities throughout the country. "Rather than identifying locations, we're identifying people," Cheri said. "You want to make sure the instruction of the facility is not compromised."

And the writing dream? That goal was accomplished, too. In 2001, Cheri published her book, "Softball Pitching Edge." ■

## 2003 Griffon Hall of Fame Inductees

**Myasthia Kelly-Editone, '82**, played from 1978-82 and was the first women's basketball player in Western history to be honored with All-America status. She held five school records at the end of her career. Myasthia lives in Albany, Georgia.

**Keith Evans** played football from 1974-1977. He was the anchor of a Griffon defense that holds the school record for fewest yards allowed in a season. He is currently a second-year medical student at Ross University School of Medicine and president /director of the Atlanta Human Performance Center, a total wellness center.

**Ed Harris** was named athletic director in 1985. He facilitated Western's move into the National Collegiate Athletics Association and helped triple Gold Coat Club membership. Ed is the athletic director at West Texas A&M University in Canyon.

**Greg Kastner, '77**, played baseball from 1971-73. He holds the single season records for fewest hits and fewest runs allowed. Greg is the assistant principal, athletic director and head baseball coach at Bishop LeBlond High School in St. Joseph.

**Marc Lewis, '91**, signed on to play football in 1978 and was a four-year letter winner. He played professional football with the U.S. Football League and the Canadian Football League. He is a regional sales manager at Wire Rope Corp. of St. Joseph.

**Kim Palmer, '85**, played basketball and softball from 1982-85. She was a key performer in Western's NAIA National Championship in 1982 and was named to the all-tournament first team.

Kim is the owner/president of Remlap Services, Inc., an outpatient physical therapy clinic, medical billing and management company in St. Augustine and Palatka, Fla. ■

## Homecoming 2003 - revelry, reunions and ... rain

Homecoming 2003 marked the first year for class reunions at Western as the college hosted activities for the classes of 1973 and 1983. The rain on Saturday put a slight damper on activities, but there was still a large crowd on hand to see the Griffons come from behind and beat the Central Missouri State Mules. Alumni Services plans to host more class reunions for Homecoming 2004; watch your mail and the fall issue of this magazine for more details. ■



Dr. Todd Eckdahl, left, and Dr. David Ashley, far right, talk to visitors at the Biology Department's open house on Friday evening Homecoming weekend.



Maizley Hughes, Alexa Hughes, Randi Schottel and Tyler Schottel show off their Western wear before the football game.



Debra and Mark, '73, McDonald and their son Joel, '01, are pictured at the tailgate lunch. Mark and his wife returned for his 30-year reunion.

Despite the rain, Leo Schmitz, '48, former faculty member, and his daughter Mary Beth, enjoy the tailgate lunch at the Alumni Pavilion before the football game.

**Mark your calendar -  
Homecoming 2004  
is Oct. 9!**



## Alumnotes

**Jerome F. Downs**, '41, an attorney, of San Francisco, is a classroom volunteer in an elementary school.

**John Beyer**, '72, of San Diego, retired from the U. S. Postal Service in December 2002 after 28 years of service.

**Stacy D. Prawl**, '74, of Clovis, Calif., is a western regional manager for Generant of New Jersey.

**Vincent "Coach" Singleton**, '74, of Lewiston, Maine, is pursuing a bachelor's degree in performing arts and contemporary music/jazz from the University of Maine.

**Susan Miller**, '75, of Kansas City, Mo., is a member of the 241st Air Traffic Control Squadron, Rosecrans ANG. She plans to pursue a para-legal career when she retires.

**Mike Parker**, '78, is the vice president for academic affairs at Highland Community College, Highland, Kan.

**David Dean**, '80, of St. Joseph, Mo., earned a master's degree in theology from Lincoln Christian Seminary, Lincoln, Ill., in May 2003.

**Sarah Pelster**, '81, is the head women's volleyball coach and coordinator of athletic alumni services at Shenandoah University, Winchester, Va.

**Len Jennings**, '83, of Belton, Mo., co-authored the book "Master Therapists: Exploring Expertise in Therapy and Counseling."

**James T. Bryan**, '91, was appointed director of safety for the city of Valley, Ala.

**Christian Tyrrell**, '91, and his wife, Angela, of Des Moines, Iowa, announce the birth of a son, Andrew Christian, born April 14, 2003. He joins sisters Maegan, 6, and Emma, 4.

**Michelle Cebulko**, '93, was appointed to the Missouri Child Abuse and Neglect Review Board. She is a pediatrician in St. Joseph.

**Jeffrey L. Coulson**, '94, of Kirksville, Mo., was promoted to the rank of corporal and was designated an assistant zone commander for the Missouri Highway Patrol Troop B of Macon, Mo.

### JC alum reminisces

William Lamborn, '40, recently sent a letter recalling his days at the Junior College.

"In 1938, Dean Nelle Blum made arrangements for me to teach dancing two days a week. We used Professor (Raymond) Elliot's music room and a Victrola," he wrote. "At age 18, I was the youngest teacher at the college."

William noted that tuition was free for St. Joseph residents and \$40 per semester for those outside the city limits. "Today, \$40 per semester might earn a cup of coffee!"

He and his wife, Elizabeth, reside in Goleta, Calif.

**Laura (Culver) Griffith**, '95, is the manager of Infection Control and Epidemiology at Mercy Medical Center in Des Moines, Iowa. She earned her master's in public health in May 2003 and is working on her doctorate in international health. She and her husband, Shaun, reside in Des Moines.

**Trish (Noeth) Butler**, '96, and her husband, Denny, of Parkville, Mo., announce the birth of a daughter, Sophia Grace, born April 24, 2003.

**Brent Batcheller**, '97, announces the birth of his son, Bryce Joshua, born July 4, 2003. Brent is the head wrestling coach at Rockwood Summit High School. He resides in Fenton, Mo.

**Heather (Hennessey) Smith**, '97, and husband, Barnaby, of Oak Grove, Mo., announce the birth of a daughter, Helen Grace, born May 7, 2003.

**Michelle (Cooper) '98, and Jeff, '98, Bles**, of St. Charles, Mo., announce the birth of a daughter, Lauren Elizabeth, born April 19, 2003. She joins a brother, Jackson, who was born Nov. 25, 2001.

**Mary Wilford Gonzalez**, '98, Gladstone, Mo., earned a master of arts degree in Christian education from the Midwestern Baptist Theological Seminary in Kansas City, Mo.

**Erin (Elliott), '98,** and **Michael, '01, Ruhling,** of Wentzville, Mo., announce the birth of a son, Jacob Paul, born Aug. 31, 2003. Erin works part time, and Michael is the customer service manager for MAB Paints in St. Louis.

**Ashley (Worrell) Sangalli,** '98, of San Antonio, recently married Michael Sangalli. She is a San Antonio Spurs Silver Dancer.

**Wendy (Villers) Sohm,** '98, is working on her master's in creative ways in learning through Lesley University in Cambridge, Mass. She teaches art and psychology at Liberty Academy Alternative High School. She and her husband, Dale, reside in Lathrop, Mo.

**Lai-Monte L. Hunter,** '99, of Kansas City, Mo., earned a master's in teaching multidisciplinary studies from Webster University, St. Louis, in August 2003.

## Calling 1941 CPT class!

H. Eugene Whitsitt, '40, of Reno, Nev., wrote that he was in the first civilian pilot training (CPT) class in 1939. E.H. "Pop" Werner was the ground school instructor and Tommy Ogle was flight instructor. Eugene obtained his instructor's rating and taught the June 1941 CPT class of the Junior College.

Eugene is looking for the eight people who obtained pilot licenses through his instruction in the summer of 1941. If you were in this class, e-mail Eugene at [g.whitsitt@sbcglobal.net](mailto:g.whitsitt@sbcglobal.net), or call the Alumni Office at (816) 271-5651.

**Ginger (Overton), '99,** and **Jason, '00, West,** of Farmville, Va., adopted a son, Joey Allen Morales West, from Guatemala in May 2003. Ginger is a homemaker. Jason received his master's from Central Missouri State University, Warrensburg, in May and is teaching physical education at Longwood University, Farmville, Va.

**Kristi Bailey,** '00, of St. Joseph, was selected as a recipient of the Missouri Bar Association's 2003 Excellence in Legal Journalism Award. She is employed at the St. Joseph News-Press.

**Thomas G. Sisco,** '00, became licensed to practice as a professional land surveyor in the state of Missouri. He and his wife, Erin, live in Richmond, Mo.

**Becky Rice,** '01, of Chicago, earned her master's degree in clinical psychology from the Illinois School of Professional Psychology where she is now working on her doctorate.

**Sarah (Rhoades) Parker,** '02, of Platte City, Mo., married Justin Parker in August 2003. She is a middle school teacher and is working on her master's in education.

**Debbie Hall,** '03, is an eighth-grade science teacher at Coronado Middle School in Kansas City, Kan.

## New magazine has three alums on staff

In September 2003, the St. Joseph News-Press launched their new monthly magazine, *Josephine*, and three staff members are Western alums.

Nichi (Sollars) Yeager, '99, is the editor, Carole Dunn, '91, is the marketing director, and Kristi Bailey, '00, is a columnist.

## In Memory ...

*We honor those alums who have recently passed away. If you want us to include someone in this listing, please call (816) 271-5651, e-mail [holtz@mwsc.edu](mailto:holtz@mwsc.edu) or mail to Alumni Office, 4525 Downs Drive, St. Joseph, MO 64507.*

**Farnol X. Adler,** Junior College, of St. Joseph, Oct. 14, 2003.

**Arthur B. Briscoe, Jr.,** '79, of St. Joseph, Sept. 3, 2003.

**Kim A. Dowell,** '78, of St. Joseph, June 25, 2003.

**Opal Brown Hargrove,** Junior College, of Faucett, Mo., Nov. 4, 2003.

**Larry L. Harper,** Junior College, of St. Joseph, Sept. 11, 2003.

**Howard G. Jones,** '48, of St. Joseph, Oct. 14, 2003.

**Virginia R. Kennard,** Junior College, of St. Joseph, June 22, 2003.

**Marsha L. Killian,** '81, Garland, Texas, Sept. 9, 2003.

**Frieda Robbins,** '36, of St. Joseph, Sept. 17, 2003.

**C. Stephen Swymeler,** Junior College, of St. Joseph, Sept. 21, 2003. ■

## John E. Downs dies in St. Joseph Nov. 9

One of Western's strongest supporters, former Missouri state Sen. John E. Downs, died Nov. 9 at the age of 86.

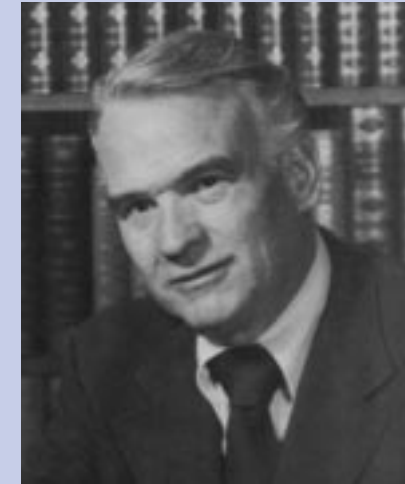
As a state senator from 1960-1970, John played a large role in not only establishing Western as a four-year institution, but in locating the campus at its present-day site. The college drive is named in his honor.

A memorial service for John was held on campus Nov. 14. Memorabilia from his life was displayed in the atrium area of the Leah Spratt Multipurpose Classroom Building. Rev. Neil Blair officiated the service, and Sen. Thomas Eagleton gave the eulogy.

"His proudest moment was as the creator of Missouri Western State College," Thomas said.

"Sen. Downs was very important to Missouri Western and its history," said Dr. James Scanlon, Western's president. "He has been a very strong supporter of the college."

John was a 1937 graduate of the St. Joseph Junior College. He earned a bachelor of law degree from the University of



John E. Downs  
1917-2003

Missouri - Columbia in 1940 and an honorary doctorate from Western in 2002. He was named Distinguished Alumnus of Western in 1984.

John, a fighter pilot in World War II, served two terms as prosecuting attorney of Buchanan County and was affiliated with the Downs-Pierce Law Firm for 20 years. He retired as an attorney with Pope, Nichols and Hicks Law Firm.

John served one term in the Missouri House of Representatives, 1957-1958, before being elected to the state senate. ■

## Looking Back ...

### 50 years ago

Bill Culver of the Junior College was elected national president of Phi Theta Kappa. Kappa, the St. Joseph chapter, represented the first coeducational school admitted into the fraternity.

### 40 years ago

Junior College students performed in the theatre production, "The Giant's Stair," and entertained audiences in a variety show, "Footlights."

### 30 years ago

Over 500 people attended the dedication of the College Center building named in honor of Miss Nelle Blum, former dean of Junior College.

### 20 years ago

Five alumni and one faculty member of Missouri Western State College will be recognized for their outstanding achievements at the first Distinguished Alumni/Faculty Awards Banquet Oct. 7.

### 10 years ago

As part of the 25th anniversary celebration of the college, the Junior College Conference Room will celebrate its grand opening. ■

## How far back can your family go?

*How many in your family have graduated from St. Joseph Junior College and Western? If your family includes two or more generations of alumni, I would like to include you in an upcoming issue of the magazine! Contact Diane Holtz at (816)271-5651 or [holtz@mwsc.edu](mailto:holtz@mwsc.edu).*

## Nursing tradition is all in the family

When Vera Onkoba, '03, and freshman Elizabeth Woolery were working on a research project for the Nursing Department last summer, they realized that nursing and Western were family traditions for each of them. Both of their mothers were not only nurses but also alums of Western.

Vera's mother, Susan Onkoba, '02, had been a nurse in Kenya for 19 years, but completed four years at Western. She is currently a nurse at Providence Medical Center in Kansas City, Kan.

**"I've always wanted to go into health care since I was seven- or eight-years old and my mom would take me out to the hospital."**

*Elizabeth Woolery, Western nursing student*

Susan said she had a passion to be a nurse even as a child. She was sick a lot and thought the nurses who cared for her were so nice. She was happy when Vera decided to pursue a nursing degree. "It's wonderful. She has those qualities of a person who always wanted to take care of people. I didn't have to encourage her."

Vera said as a child she would watch her mother take care of people, and decided she wanted to be a nurse, too. "I always felt the compassion she felt for her patients, and I've always loved caring for people."

Vera's sister, Vivian, is studying nursing at Western. Two brothers, Victor and Vincent, and another sister, Violet, are also students.

Elizabeth's mother, Sharon, '90, began working on her college degree after her three children were born. She is a nurse at Heartland Health in St. Joseph.

Sharon said she advised Elizabeth to pursue a nursing degree because her daughter wanted the patient contact. Because of her experiences at

Western, Sharon said she encouraged Elizabeth to enroll here, also.

"I've always wanted to go into health care since I was seven- or eight-years old and my mom would take me out to the hospital," said Elizabeth. She currently works as a certified nursing assistant at a local nursing home while she attends Western.

Vera said she had a phenomenal experience at Western as an undergraduate. "I've enjoyed every single step. I've had door after door after door open for me." ■

### Nursing Program addresses national shortage

The Nursing Department has expanded in an effort to address the nationwide shortage of healthcare personnel. Beginning this semester, the program began accepting 10 more applicants each semester, increasing the total to 50 students per semester.

Last year, Western had more applicants than they could accept and for this spring semester, department Chair Kathleen Andrews said they received 120 applications for the 50 spots.

Heartland Health of St. Joseph has partnered with the college to provide assistance for funding for additional faculty members. The health care facility will also provide adjunct faculty at the start of the expansion.

"We see our role as making programs available and offering high-quality programs," said Dr. Jeanne Daffron, dean of the School of Professional Studies.

The department was recently granted accreditation of the program by the Commission on Collegiate Nursing Education (CCNE) for a maximum term of 10 years, extending to Dec. 31, 2013. ■



Dr. Margaret King, Class of 1973

## Alum Profile

**Who:** Dr. Margaret King, class of 1973

**Degree:** Bachelor of science in biology

**Western memory:** It was the last semester of her senior year, and Margaret still needed a PE class. Scuba diving was the only class that fit her schedule. There was a slight problem, however - it was not open to women in 1973. But the college made an exception and she took the class!

Dr. Margaret (Webb) King was very involved in politics as a political science major at the Junior College. But after taking Dr. Tom Rachow's biology class for nonmajors, she changed her major to biology and graduated with the highest GPA in the department. Today, she is a medical doctor whose specialty is nephrology, functions and diseases of the kidney.

Margaret returned to Western last fall for the first time since graduation to attend her 30-year class reunion during Homecoming. While on campus, Margaret visited the Biology Department's open house and met several current students.

"It was very encouraging to meet several biology students and to see their concern regarding environmental problems," she said. "I am happy that Western is educating the people who will continue the efforts needed to make the world a better place. It makes me feel hopeful!"

As a student, she said she received a lot of moral support from campus offices, such as the Student Loan (now Financial Aid) Office. When the staff discovered she had no stove in her house, for example, they gave her the money to purchase an electric skillet. "I kept that receipt for years. My son still remembers that avocado skillet."

"The college really nurtured me in so many ways -- it was a 'holistic' approach. I never felt the warmth and appreciation for the other colleges I attended like I have for Missouri Western. Those were very happy days. I have great memories."

She fondly remembers Leo Gallaway of the Biology Department, who was so important to her college experience. For his taxonomy class, she typed several cards for a display. When she was all finished, Leo kindly mentioned that she had misspelled "Buchanan" (County) on every card.

When Margaret graduated from Western, she gave little thought to medical school. "In those days it was hard to have a vision as a woman. I had never seen a woman doctor."

But several years later, she realized that was her goal. She graduated from medical school at the University of Minnesota and completed her internship and residency at the University of California - San Francisco.

Today, she calls her practice a "career locum," where she fills in for nephrologists on leave or at clinics with an opening.

Although she lives in California with her husband Jim

Loughborough, she is licensed to practice in 20 states and has worked all over the country for 11 years. Last year, she spent six months in Hawaii filling in for a colleague on maternity leave.

Margaret said she loves her career and likes to remember that it all started with a biology class for nonmajors. "It never would have happened without Missouri Western." ■

**"The college really nurtured me in so many ways -- it was a 'holistic' approach. I never felt the warmth and appreciation for the other colleges I attended like I have for Missouri Western. Those were very happy days. I have great memories."**

*- Dr. Margaret King, class of 1973*

# Honor Roll of Donors

The following is a list of those who donated to the **Western Alumni Association** between July 1 and December 31, 2003:

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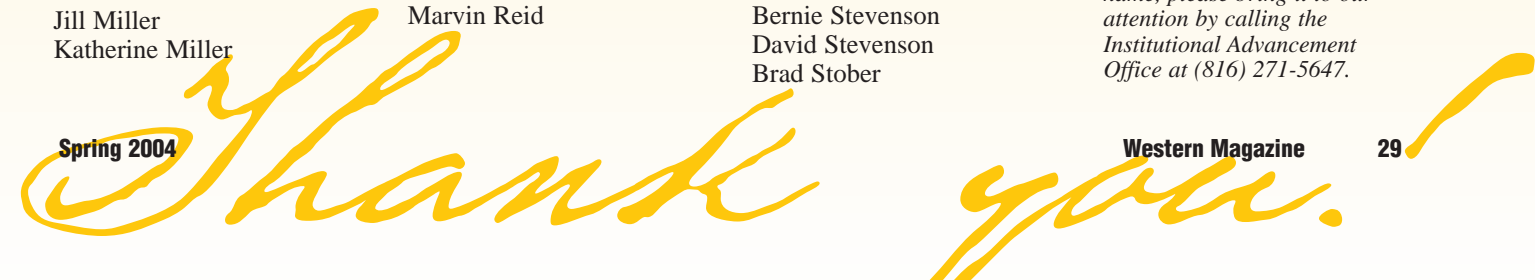
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*If we have inadvertently omitted or incorrectly listed a name, please bring it to our attention by calling the Institutional Advancement Office at (816) 271-5647.*







## Calendar of Events

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- March 4-7** Men's and Women's MIAA Championship Tournament, Kansas City  
Municipal Auditorium
- March 4-7** "Angel in America Part One: Millennium Approaches,"  
Potter Fine Arts Theater
- March 8-26** Faculty Art Exhibit, Mixed Media; Potter Fine Arts Gallery; opening  
reception 2 p.m. March 8.
- March 8** Lewis and Clark Planetarium Show, 7:30 p.m., Agenstein Building, 105
- March 10** Lewis and Clark Planetarium Show, 7:30 p.m., Agenstein Building, 105
- March 10** Alumni Association Telefund ends
- March 11** Concert Band/Chamber Winds Concert, 7:30 p.m., Potter Fine Arts Theater
- March 23** Pre-contest Choral Concert, 7:30 p.m., Potter Fine Arts Theater
- March 24-27** Division II Women's Elite 8 Tournament, Civic Arena, St. Joseph
- March 30** Flute Recital, 7:30 p.m., Potter Fine Arts Theater
- April 5-16** Senior Art Exhibits, Potter Fine Arts Gallery and Foyer; opening 7 p.m. April 5
- April 8** Alumni Association Annual Reception and Meeting, 5 p.m.  
Blum Student Union, 218
- April 19-30** Senior Art Exhibits, Potter Fine Arts Gallery and Foyer; opening 7 p.m. April 19
- April 22-25** "Valparaiso," Potter Fine Arts Theater
- April 25** Jazz Ensemble Concert, 7:30 p.m., Potter Fine Arts Theater  
Junior College Brunch
- April 27** Flute Choir Concert, 7:30 p.m., Potter Fine Arts Theater
- April 30** Ambassadors' Night at the Ritz, Ramada Inn
- May 1** Symphonic Winds Concert, 7:30 p.m., Missouri Theater, 717 Edmond
- May 2** Choral Concert, 3 p.m., Potter Fine Arts Theater
- May 3** Orchestra Concert, 7:30 p.m., Potter Fine Arts Theater
- May 15** Spring Commencement
- June 7-30** Lewis and Clark Planetarium Show; Mondays, Tuesdays and Wednesdays,  
7:30 p.m., Agenstein Building, 105
- July 5-7** Lewis and Clark Planetarium Show; 7:30 p.m., Agenstein Building, 105
- July – TBA** International Guitar Festival, check for updates at [www.mwsc.edu/guitarfestival](http://www.mwsc.edu/guitarfestival)
- August 30** Fall 2004 classes begin
- October 8-10** Homecoming Reunion Weekend

**For more information, call 816-271-5651  
or visit our website at [www.mwsc.edu/news.html](http://www.mwsc.edu/news.html)**

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*Discover* **gold** *This spring, Western will  
unveil its new branding  
initiative – stay tuned!*