



Missouri Western

The magazine of Missouri Western State University | Fall 2014



COMMUNITY MEMBERS LEAD MISSOURI WESTERN INTO

the next century

DALE AND DAN BOULWARE,
MARY MARGARET AND DR. MARK LANEY

PG. 16



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Bill Wright recently notified the Foundation that it is a beneficiary in his estate plan of almost \$500,000 to be used for scholarships for students in the arts programs.

“I was impressed by everyone I met in the arts programs. There is incredible potential for the arts at Missouri Western,” Bill said. “I

had the money, and it was time to start seeding it to make things grow. I hope other people will get the idea, too.”



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.

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Missouri Western State University is an equal opportunity institution.

| PRESIDENT'S PERSPECTIVE |

“Everyone must leave something behind when he dies, my grandfather said. A child or a book or a painting or a house or a wall built or a pair of shoes made. Or a garden planted. Something your hand touched some way so your soul has somewhere to go when you die, and when people look at that tree or that flower you planted, you’re there.”

“It doesn’t matter what you do, he said, so long as you change something from the way it was before you touched it into something that’s like you after you take your hands away.”

Ray Bradbury, “Fahrenheit 451”



Dear Friends,

It seemed only fitting that we celebrate some of the many legacies that are being left at Missouri Western State University as we prepare to enter our Centennial year in 2015. For 100 years, Missouri Western has been transforming lives, leaving a legacy in our region. This would not be possible without the impact and the legacies of each and every one of you.

As president, I am continually touched by the students, alumni, community members and families who have left their own legacies at Missouri Western.

I am touched by community members like Dan and Dale Boulware and Mark and Mary Margaret Laney,

who have given of their time and talents to lead Missouri Western in our coming Centennial Capital Campaign. Their enthusiasm and passion for the University and for their community is inspiring. I am thankful for their leadership and know they will have a lasting impact on the legacy of Missouri Western and of this region (see p.16).

I am touched by families like the James and Jean Kelley family, who have supported the University for generations by sending their children and grandchildren to Missouri Western and by transforming the very face of our campus through their generous gifts.

I am touched by our donors, whose passion for the University fuels our ability to continue transforming lives. People like Steven Craig, who is actively building a legacy at the University through every student who comes through the Craig School of Business, and every new entrepreneur that graduates from Missouri Western (see p. 13).

I am touched by alumni like Jerry Partridge '86, head football coach, and his son, Travis '13 (see p. 20). Jerry's legacy has been told not just through the successful football program he has built but also in the character of his players and of his son, who is now playing professional football.

The depth of the legacies left at Missouri Western is truly inspiring. Thanks to all of you, whose touch has transformed lives, whose hands have built our University, whose influence builds our future. It is an honor to work beside you.

Robert A. Vartabedian

Robert A. Vartabedian
President,
Missouri Western State University

| ON THE COVER | Co-chairs of the Centennial Capital Campaign include Dan and Dale Boulware and Mark and Mary Margaret Laney. Photo by Randy Edmonds

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Dr. Melinda Kovacs discovered a unique, furry way to relieve student stress during finals week this past spring.



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Air Guard partnership expands

Missouri Western and the 139th Airlift Wing of the Missouri Air National Guard recently forged a stronger partnership to benefit both Guard members and University students. Dr. Jeanne Daffron '75, provost and vice president for Academic Affairs, said Missouri Western is undertaking two major initiatives to provide additional educational opportunities for members of the 139th.

In the first initiative, guard members can now complete their Community College of the Air Force (CCAF) associate degree by taking general education courses at Missouri Western. They can take courses on campus or online, with more than 250 general education online courses offered.

The second initiative is the option to continue on to a bachelor's degree using their CCAF associate degree or other transfer credits. They can select a traditional bachelor's degree or a Bachelor of General Studies degree, which is specifically tailored for those who have some college credits but have delayed their studies.

MSgt. Bart Watts was the first member of the 139th to enroll in the new initiative. He is currently taking two courses, one online and one on campus, and that will complete his requirements for the CCAF associate degree. Watts noted that an associate degree will make him eligible for promotion.

He then plans to continue taking classes to earn a Bachelor of General Studies degree from Missouri Western, and he found out that his military experience of almost 25 years counted for some college credits, as well.

"This is great for military guys with a lot of experience," he said. "They may be the biggest group of people earning the Bachelor of General Studies."

Details about the degree completion programs can be found at missouriwestern.edu/military.

"Education is the key to advancement in the Air National Guard, and we're grateful that Missouri Western is making these educational opportunities available," said Col. Ralph Schwader '85, Wing Commander. ■



MSgt. Bart Watts

Campus Kudos

- The research of **Dr. Kristen Walton**, associate professor of biology, and **Erica Pasch '10** was cited in an article in Parade Magazine, "Battle in Your Belly." The research was conducted as part of the University's PORTAL program, and Pasch presented the results at a national conference when she was a student. Parade is distributed through more than 400 newspapers throughout the country with a circulation of around 33 million.
- **Dr. Katie Kendig**, assistant professor of philosophy, received the 2014 Governor's Award for Excellence in Teaching. She received the award at a luncheon last spring.
- **Lauren Black**, graphic design student, was part of a team who participated in the NASA Space Apps Challenge at Ingenology in Kansas City, Mo.
- The Engineering Technology Advancement Committee presented awards to a student and an industry leader at its annual awards banquet March 24. **Ian Micah White**, construction engineering technology major, was presented with the Student Excellence Award. **Donald P. Coleman**, former president of Coleman Industrial Construction, received the Engineering Technology Excellence Award.
- At the Missouri College Media Association Convention this past spring, the following students earned awards: **Brian Duskey**, first place in Entertainment Review; **Gary Smith**, first place in Multimedia; and **Joe Snapp**, first place in Information Graphic. ■

Walter Cronkite Memorial: Phase II complete



multiple occasions to narrate programs about space.”

Another new feature is the addition of “Cronkite,” a live multimedia presentation. Featuring a professional actor, Jim Korinke, the show is an adaptation of an interview with Walter Cronkite by Larry King on the first anniversary of 9-11. Video, audio and still images were added to enhance and dramatize the performance. The show, conceived and edited by Dr. Vartabedian, is held for large groups in the Kemper Recital Hall next to the Memorial.

During the interview, in addition to discussing 9-11, King invites Cronkite to reflect on his career and the field of journalism.

Dr. Mapley said the presentation is scheduled regularly and by appointment for large groups. “The audio, video, photographic images, musical underscore and a live actor make this a unique and very interesting presentation.”

The final component of Phase II is related to the main kiosk that features



The Walter Cronkite Memorial in Spratt Hall added several new features since opening in November 2013, and a sneak preview was held in June when Walter “Chip” Cronkite III visited the Memorial for the first time.

“It’s beautiful,” Cronkite said of the Memorial. “Dad would be very pleased with this extraordinary exhibit.”

One of the highlights is a beautiful bronze bust of Cronkite on a granite pedestal that was completed this past summer. The artist, Eric Fuson ’88, instructor of art, worked with the Cronkite family in its creation, said Dr. Gordon Mapley, dean and executive director of the Western Institute. It is slightly larger than life-size, and “it is phenomenally accurate.”

Also, a second display case was constructed to house Cronkite memorabilia. Since the Memorial opened, Dr. Mapley said several individuals have stepped forward to

donate Cronkite memorabilia, and other visitors have mentioned donating items in the future, so additional display space was needed.

One of the more popular displays among locals was the recording of Cronkite’s visit to St. Joseph in 1969, so that display was enhanced as part of Phase II. Interactive photos of the individuals featured in the video, many of whom still have local ties, were added next to the kiosk that plays a recording of the event.

The University recently acquired a planetarium show narrated by Cronkite. Groups now have the option of visiting the Bushman Planetarium in Agenstein Hall to view the show, which has a brief introduction and closing by Dr. Robert Vartabedian, Missouri Western’s president.

“Walter Cronkite was an avid supporter of the space program,” Dr. Mapley said. “He was called upon

39 historical events covered by Cronkite throughout his career. Originally, visitors could watch Cronkite as he reported the event and, for most of the events, listen to his reflections about these events taped several years later. A third option will be available, thanks to Dr. Steven Greiert, professor of history and department chair. He created video, audio and images that explains the historical context of each event, and its importance to 20th century American history.

The memorial will receive the Governor’s Spotlight Award at the 2014 Governor’s Conference on Tourism in St. Louis this October.

For more information about the Walter Cronkite Memorial or to schedule a group visit, call (816) 271-4100 or visit waltercronkitememorial.org. ■



Professional actor Jim Korinke portrays Walter Cronkite in a live, multimedia presentation.

Cronkite historian to speak at Convocation

Dr. Douglas Brinkley, professor of history at Rice University and prolific biographer, will be the featured speaker at the 21st R. Dan Boulware Convocation on Critical Issues at 10 a.m. Tuesday, Nov. 4 in the Looney Complex on campus. The Convocation is free and open to the public.

Dr. Brinkley’s book, “Cronkite,” is a New York Times best-selling biography of Walter Cronkite, who was born in St. Joseph. Dr. Brinkley will speak on what would have been Cronkite’s 98th birthday.

In addition to the Convocation, Dr. Brinkley will be the guest of honor at a Convocation luncheon following his presentation. He will speak the preceding day at the inaugural Walter Cronkite Conference on Media Ethics

and Integrity, co-sponsored by Missouri Western and the Media Ethics Division of the Association for Education in Journalism and Mass Communication.

Dr. Brinkley has written books about former presidents Theodore Roosevelt, Franklin Roosevelt, John F. Kennedy, Jimmy Carter and Ronald Reagan, as well as presidential candidate John Kerry.

Six of Dr. Brinkley’s books were selected as New York Times Notable Books of the Year. “The Great Deluge: Hurricane Katrina, New Orleans,



Dr. Douglas Brinkley

and the Mississippi Gulf Coast” was the recipient of the Robert F. Kennedy Book Award and a finalist for the Los Angeles Times Book Award. “The Great Wilderness Warrior: Theodore Roosevelt and the Crusade for America” was the recipient of the National Outdoor Book Award.

Dr. Brinkley completed his bachelor’s degree at The Ohio State University and received his doctorate in U.S. Diplomatic History from Georgetown University in 1989.

The Convocation is sponsored by the Missouri Western State University Foundation. ■

Above, family members of Walter Cronkite visited the Walter Cronkite Memorial in June. Walter Cronkite’s son “Chip” is to the right of the prototype of Walter Cronkite’s bust. Right, Eric Fuson ’88, creator of the bronze bust.

Upgrades across the University

At its February 2014 meeting, the Board of Governors accepted a bid of \$750,509 from Lee Grover Construction Company of St. Joseph for an addition to Potter Hall and renovations to Wilson Hall and the Looney Complex. The Board had previously approved using reserve funds to pay for the three initiatives.

The largest project is a one-story addition to Potter Hall, which houses the School of Fine Arts. A new percussion space and restrooms, totaling approximately 3,400 square feet, will be built, and existing restrooms will be renovated into office space. The project also includes the addition of a circle drive in front of Potter. The total bid on the Potter Hall work was \$635,692, and construction should be completed this fall.

"This project will address some of our most pressing facility needs," said Dr. Bob Willenbrink, founding dean of the School of Fine Arts. "Our percussion students have been practicing for years in 'temporary' modular units, so I'm happy we can provide them with permanent space, and the new restrooms and circle drive will be much appreciated by the many people who come to Potter Hall for performances and exhibits."

The Wilson Hall project included the renovation of restrooms on the first and second floors, repairs and upgrades to the HVAC system, and repairs to the exterior masonry and southeastern

entrance. Wilson Hall houses the academic departments of Criminal Justice, Legal Studies and Social Work; Engineering Technology; and Military Science, as well as the Law Enforcement Academy; Campus Printing and Design Services and Y's Kids World.

In the Looney Complex, the baseball locker room and men's and women's visitor locker rooms were remodeled. Looney houses Recreation Services, Griffon Athletics and the Department of Health, Physical Education and Recreation.

Work on Wilson Hall and the Looney Complex was completed this past summer.

There were also several changes on campus regarding food services. In March, a new Java City opened on the first floor of the Blum Union adjacent to the Kelley Commons outdoor area. Along with its coffee options, that spot also offers smoothies and several "grab and go" food items.

The food court in the Blum Union was also remodeled this past summer, adding a Subway and WOK, which is a stir fry option; as well as a F'Real shake machine. The two new restaurants are replacing Quiznos and Caliente. The deli in Popplewell was also renovated and reopened this fall. Kathy DeWalt, ARAMARK manager, said that



The new Java City in Blum Union.

location is similar to a convenience store, with self-service, but it still offers hot breakfast and lunch items.

"It's always good to have something new and different," DeWalt said. "These changes will help fill some desires that we weren't meeting." ■



"I've been at Missouri Western for 33 years, as a student and staff member, and I've enjoyed every second of it. If I could only give a portion of the knowledge and the commitment that my professors, my coaches and staff members gave to me when I was a student, then I feel like I've given back what they've given to me."

- Wonda Berry, '84, Director of Recreation Services

"Song Goes Off" for student

By the time Deondre Ross graduates from Missouri Western next December, he hopes you will know his name or at least have heard his music. The public relations major has written and produced several songs and music videos and is hoping to make it big in the music industry.

It all started more than a decade ago, when Ross was 7 years old. He was visiting his cousin, who was producing "weird noises" on the computer. Immediately enthralled, the child joined all about computer-generated music.

Later that day, Ross, from Jefferson City, Mo., asked his father for a computer and software so he could make music, too, and his father brought a computer home the next day.

"He wasn't rich, he just believed in me enough to do that," Ross says.

He estimates he has written thousands of songs since.



Ross, who plays drums and piano, is making inroads into the music business, growing his fan base through social media and online. He has written and produced songs that have become great hits on YouTube, has released songs on iTunes that have sold well, and performed in a variety of venues. "It's working," he says, "it's just a slow process."

When "Song Goes Off" was released on iTunes, Ross says he walked out of his room in Leaverton Hall and could hear

people playing his song. "It's crazy to do something you love and have so much influence on people."

He readily gives credit to those who have helped him get his music and videos out. "I never refer to 'I,' my team is just as important as I am."

Team members include Usala Still, Devin Whittler, Taylor Crouse, Ania Jamerson, Nathan Hershey and Ashlyn Stevens, who is also a Missouri Western student.

He calls his music style a crossover between pop, rhythm and blues, hip hop and dubstep. "I hear the songs in my head, and the craziest part is actually getting them out of my head," Ross says with a laugh. "Every song I put together, I've heard it in my head and was able to get it out exactly like it sounded in my head."

Deondre Ross. You heard it here first. ■



| Jump Rope for Heart |

Missouri Western hosts Jump Rope for Heart every year, when hundreds of elementary school students raise money for the American Heart Association in the Looney Complex.

Three new master's degrees offered

Missouri Western has been approved for three new graduate degree programs. A Master of Applied Science, Industrial Life Science started in spring 2014 and a Masters in Information Management, Enterprise Resource Planning began this fall. The Master of Science in Nursing Healthcare Leadership added a new option and graduate certificate: Nurse Educator. Those were also offered for the first time this fall.

Master of Applied Science, Industrial Life Science

The new industrial life science degree, like all Master of Applied Science degrees at Missouri Western, consists of both discipline-specific academic training as well as cross-training in business and communications. The program provides advanced training in biology and chemistry while developing workplace skills valued by employers, said Dr. Ben Caldwell, dean of the Graduate School.

The degree is an option for current biologists and chemists seeking career advancement, as well as recent science graduates looking for a competitive edge as they enter the workforce. Most courses are scheduled after 4:30 p.m.

St. Joseph is a part of the Animal Health Corridor, the single largest concentration of animal health businesses in the world. Companies in the region stretching from Manhattan, Kan., to Columbia, Mo., are responsible for about one-third of the \$19 billion global animal health market. According to a recent survey by the Kansas City Area Life Sciences Institute, nearly 80 percent of the 240 life science companies in the Animal Health Corridor plan to expand in the next three years.

For more information, visit missouriwestern.edu/graduate or call Dr. Jason Baker at (816) 271-4380.

Masters in Information Management, Enterprise Resource Planning

The Masters in Information Management, Enterprise Resource Planning is the first graduate degree program for the Craig School of Business.

Enterprise resource planning, or ERP, systems are comprehensive data management tools used by a variety of businesses and organizations. The new program is intended to prepare graduates to work in an ERP environment with a sophisticated understanding of business processes, and methods of implementing best practices in organizations.

Dr. Mike Lane, dean of the Craig School of Business, believes the program will fill a great need in the business community. Several companies in St. Joseph and the Kansas City area utilize SAP enterprise software as their ERP system, and graduates will be prepared to contribute to these companies upon graduation.

"Graduates should be able to cross over platforms fairly easily to other ERP systems if necessary," Dr. Lane said. "The business process skills taught in this program are universal."

Students will have an option to take an SAP certification test as part of the program.

For more information, call (816) 271-4338 or visit missouriwestern.edu/graduate.

Master of Science in Nursing Health Care Leadership/Nurse Educator

Offering a Nurse Educator option in the graduate program is an effort to address the projected nursing shortage, not just regionally, but nationally, according to Dr. Carolyn Brose, MSN program director.

"We have to be sure we are building a pipeline of nurses to meet the health care needs of the nation," she said. "It is important that we work to sustain and build a workforce for nursing."

The Department of Nursing and Allied Health began offering a master's program with a Leadership option and graduated the first class in spring 2013. The Nurse Educator is the second option in the program.

The option offers courses specific to education, such as curriculum development, teaching strategies and evaluation strategies, Dr. Brose said, and is aimed at those with a bachelor's or master's degree in nursing who want to teach.

The master's option is 32 credit hours. It includes core courses, such as foundation of leadership, statistics, informatics and research, along with 15 hours of education-centered courses. The graduate certificate is the 15 credit hours of education-centered courses only. Students have the opportunity to earn the certificate and seamlessly continue with the master's degree.

For more information, see missouriwestern.edu/graduate or call (816) 271-4415. ■



"Missouri Western is transforming lives because it has stayed engaged, not only with what is happening today, but it has shown its ability to look ahead to the future."
- Esther George '80, President,
Federal Reserve Bank of Kansas City

Communicators present at international conferences

Daniel Cobb believes his resumé got a real boost when he presented his research at a conference in May 2014. He and other Missouri Western



students were some of the few undergraduate groups selected to present at an international conference in Athens, Greece.

They were part of a group of six convergent media majors and 16 public relations majors who traveled throughout Europe last May, where Missouri Western students presented at conferences in Athens, Malta, and Dubrovnik, Croatia. Dr. Robert Bergland, professor of journalism, accompanied the convergent media students and Dr. Christopher Bond, associate professor of communication, accompanied

the public relations students. Several of the students received funds from the Missouri Western State University Foundation's Student Excellence Fund, which supports student presentations at conferences.

The two groups of students traveled together to Athens and London until the convergent media students headed to their conference in Dubrovnik and

the public relations students went to Malta for theirs. Other destinations along the way included Venice; Rome; Mendrisio, Switzerland; and Dublin; depending on the group.

"The highlight for me was seeing my students present at conferences, seeing the fruition of their work," Dr. Bergland said. "The quality of their presentations and the quality of their research were on par with the other presentations at the conferences."

"The entire process – from planning, traveling, sightseeing and presenting at conferences – was an outstanding experience," said Dr. Bond. "The program provided a unique opportunity to see far-away places that we have only heard about while connecting and building relationships with fellow students and faculty. One student summed it up best by calling our study abroad a 'European extravaganza.'"

Cobb, a convergent media major, said highlights for him were probably

London and Rome. "I think everyone should travel outside their own country for the cultural experience. It was a great experience, and I'd love to do it again."

Stephen Solomon, a public relations major, said London was the highlight of the trip for him, also. "We got to see the most famous 'tourist' sites and had a little time to relax," he said.

Dr. Bergland said he was happy that his students embraced the foreign travel and got as much out of the trip as they could. "I was really proud of my students every step of the way: researching, presenting and embracing the opportunities. They really wanted to experience the different cultures and history."

"Being able to present there was fantastic," Cobb said of the Athens conference. "It's a wonderful thing to put on my resumé that I presented overseas."

"I loved it," Solomon said. "It was a great opportunity to see several countries, and I want to study abroad again." ■



Lifetime Sports Academy | The 41st annual weeklong Lifetime Sports Academy drew more than 100 youth to campus this summer. Physical education and recreation majors enjoy the opportunity to help with the event each year.

Missouri Western helps commemorate historical centennial

In May 2013, Missouri Western students performed “American Story,” a musical retelling of the Ludlow Massacre, in Trinidad, Colo. They were invited back this year by the Ludlow Centennial Commemoration Commission to take part in the centennial commemoration of that event, a pivotal moment in American labor history.

The Ludlow Massacre occurred April 20, 1914 when the Colorado state militia attacked and burned a tent city housing striking mine workers who had been evicted from their company-owned homes. As many as 25 people died, including two women and 11 children.

“The performance of ‘American Story’ by the students from Missouri Western State University was one of the highlights of the Ludlow Centennial

“I was pleasantly surprised by the large amount of people who were captivated by the show. The audience was very pleased to see us telling their story.”

- Junior music major Jacob Mills

Commemoration,” said Cecil Roberts, president of the United Mine Workers of America.

Music major Sarah Waters, who played community activist Mother Jones, was part of the cast both years. Some of her lines were direct quotations from Jones, and Waters noticed the audience saying many of the words along with her throughout the play.

“This was the perfect audience for the production. They have a history with



Missouri Western music students, along with Dr. Susan Carter, front left; and Dr. Laurel Vartabedian, back second from right; at the Ludlow Massacre memorial in Colorado.

this, and they were with us through the whole show,” she said.

The students arrived for the performance in costume several minutes before their stage time. “Going there, I was thinking, ‘Will they know who I am?’” Waters said. “I took two steps into the crowd, and everyone began yelling, ‘Mother Jones! Mother Jones!’ and they wanted their picture taken with me.”

Junior music major Jacob Mills was one of three new cast members this year. “I was pleasantly surprised by the large amount of people who were captivated by the show. The audience was very pleased to see us telling their story.”

The performance was under an open tent, and Mills said the audience kept growing with every song they performed.

Along with Mills and Waters, the performers included students Lauren Bergman, Kaitlyn Christian, Caleb Hazelwood, Jeremy Howe, Donovan Jones, community member Dee Dee Squires and Adrienne Collins ’14. Dr. Susan Carter, director of vocal studies, joined them on the trip, as did Dr. Laurel Vartabedian, who wrote the book and lyrics for “American Story.”

“The people you met and the stories you heard made it a great experience,” Waters said. ■

Ritter ’02 works for awareness on campus

When Mike Ritter ’02 goes out to eat at a restaurant, shops in a retail store or walks across campus, he notices things that many of us do not. He pays close attention to features like parking spaces, curbing, doorways and restrooms. Ritter, the coordinator of the Accessibility Resource Center (ARC), can’t help it; looking out for those types of things has been part of his career for the last 15 years.

“Once you work with people with disabilities for any amount of time, you really develop a new way of looking at the world, and, as a result, you begin to see things through the filter of accessibility,” Ritter said.

His office, he says, “strives to create an educational environment that takes into consideration a very diverse group of learners. We remove the barriers and provide the opportunities, but success still rests very much on the shoulders of these students.”

Ritter is marking the 25th anniversary of his office on campus this year, and he recently reflected on its history.

The center started when it was added to the responsibilities of Ellen Kisker in 1989, and six students asked for help that first year. Kisker managed the program until Lois Fox was hired and the position was made full-time. Ritter worked for Fox when he was a student, and became the coordinator when she retired in 2004. Today, it is not uncommon for more than 200 students per semester to request services through the ARC.

A trip across campus reveals accessible sidewalks and parking spaces, resting benches and automatic doors, and a new sidewalk connecting the campus to the Missouri Department of Conservation building, all improvements over the past 25 years. Also, the adaptive technology area has greatly expanded in that time, with more equipment available to students with disabilities and a full-time technician working with them.

But the greatest change, Ritter says, has been the willingness of instructors to embrace a diverse group of learners. “When a teacher becomes inspired to teach in new and different ways so that every student has an opportunity to learn,

that is just about perfect.”

And the greatest challenge? A campus that was constructed long before people really began thinking about accessibility. But he is confident that the ARC will meet the challenges and appreciates the support of Shana Meyer, vice president for Student Affairs, and staff members.

“The students are the greatest success stories,” Ritter says. “If you could only know how hard many of them have had to work to overcome seemingly insurmountable challenges, you would simply be amazed. Their success is my greatest reward.” ■

Tree house for everyone is a reality

About three years ago, Mike Ritter ’02, coordinator for the Accessibility Resource Center on campus, had an idea for an amazing tree house – a tree house for everyone, no matter their ability. After a lot of work and support from all quarters of the community, especially from the Parks and Recreation Department in St. Joseph, his idea is coming to fruition.

The Tree House for Everyone was built this past summer at Bartlett Park.

“To say that I am excited about seeing the Tree House completed is an understatement. I have imagined a thousand times the look on people’s faces as they discover that everyone, regardless of age or ability, can enjoy the tree house experience,” Ritter said.

“Unfortunately, we cannot undo the effects of disability or stop the aging process by simply building a tree house. But, what we hope to do is improve the quality of life for everyone in our community. And we think that makes the Tree House for Everyone a very worthwhile endeavor.” ■

Spring Break service

Students spent their spring break helping out in New Orleans as part of the Barbara Sprong Leadership Challenge. Pictured are Tiffany Butler and Alia Sheya in the front, and Kassie Kreissler, Sam McClary, Janica Lowry and Tobias Pointer in the back.



Western Playhouse provides summer entertainment

Missouri Western's summer theatre program, Western Playhouse, performed "Music Man" and "Mother Divine" for large audiences.

"Music Man," which ran in June, won five Tony Awards, including Best Musical, when it debuted on Broadway in 1957. It is one of the most beloved musicals ever produced. Dallas Henry, assistant professor of theatre and cinema, played the lead role of Harold Hill. The play was directed by Tee Quillin, assistant professor of theatre and cinema. Mark Pennington was music director.

The cast also included students Riley Bayer, Lauren Bergman, Erik Burns-Sprung, Caleb Hazelwood, Nerissa Lee, Jacob Mills, Sebastian Smith, and Derek Thompson '14.

"Mother Divine," written by Dr. Laurel Vartabedian, was performed in July. It was one of 10 shows selected for the New York Musical Theatre Festival's 2013 Next Link Project out

The top two photos are from "Mother Divine," the bottom two from "Music Man."

of more than 200 national and international shows submitted.

Father Divine was played by Randy Davis, who has performed on Broadway and with many national and international tours. Mother Divine was played by Betti O., who was a national winner on Showtime at the Apollo. She has performed nationally and internationally.

The cast included students Lauren Bergman, Thomas Delgado, Amanda Estep and Jacob Mills, and Derek Thompson '14.

The play was directed by Dr. Robert Willenbrink, founding dean of the School of Fine Arts, and the musical director was New York-based Colin Welford. ■



Entrepreneurship program grows and thrives

The Craig School of Business announced in May that four new entrepreneurs will have the opportunity to own and operate their own businesses as part of the CSB's entrepreneurship program, continuing the legacy of Steve Craig's gift to the University in 2008. Zachary Brelsford '14 was awarded an Aspen Leaf Yogurt in San Antonio, Texas; Amanda Keeling '12 was awarded a Rocky Mountain Chocolate Factory in Oak View Mall in Omaha, Neb.; Caleb Mackey was awarded an RMCF in Silverthorne, Colo.; and Melanie Ware '14 was awarded an RMCF in Naperville, Ill.

Four is the greatest number of stores awarded at one time since the program began in 2009. With the addition of this latest class, 19 have been awarded stores in 13 states.

"We had an outstanding class of finalists, and a very strong group," said Craig, Missouri Western benefactor and one of the judges for the competition. "Missouri Western faculty and staff did a great job preparing this group."

The four winners were among the students in the senior-level applied entrepreneurship course this past spring. They created business plans for a store and presented their plans to an interview panel made up of Craig, Missouri Western graduates who had won franchises in previous years, Missouri Western faculty members, and other business leaders and representatives from RMCF, including company founder and president Frank Crail.

For the Rocky Mountain and Aspen Leaf stores, RMCF provides initial capital for the stores, which the alumni pay back over five years. To date, five owners have paid off their stores, all within less than three years.



Missouri Western's four newest entrepreneurs include Zachary Brelsford, Amanda Keeling, Melanie Ware and Caleb Mackey.

Mackey, from Frisco, Colo., is not an alumnus. He had been a business associate at Wells Fargo Bank and part-time employee at the Rocky Mountain Chocolate Factory owned by Seth '08 and Kelsey '08 Lyons in Silverthorne, Colo. since 2011. He purchased that store from the Lyons.

Dr. Mike Lane, dean of the Craig School of Business, said when Mackey requested to take the class, a local committee reviewed his application, an interview was held, and he was allowed to participate in the program.

"Once in a while, we make an exception for candidates who want to participate, whose credentials are strong, and whose references are very positive," Dr. Lane said.

The program has been very successful. Six Missouri Western owners have been awarded Rocky Mountain's "Rookie of the Year" awards. At the 2013 awards ceremony, Leslie Oberg '11 and James Burris, owners of the St. Joseph stores, received the Customer Service Award. Additionally, every store owned by a Missouri Western graduate increased sales over the past year.

The store in Lehi, Utah, owned by Allie Humphrey '11 and her business partner, Matt Canaday '08, was named the 2012 Small Business of the Year by the Lehi Chamber of Commerce, and the store in Vicksburg, Miss., owned by Brady '10 and TyAnn '10 Ellis was named the 2013 Small Business of the Year by the Vicksburg Chamber of Commerce. ■



"Missouri Western is a resource to the community — its facilities, faculty, staff and students. We are here for the community to come ask us what they need. In my experience, we find a way to give back to the community."
— Dr. Brian Cronk, Department of Psychology Chair

Spring 2014 Commencement



Centennial Notes: Commencement

For the first time in more than 30 years, Missouri Western's spring commencement ceremony was held in Spratt Memorial Stadium. As the University approaches its centennial year, 2015, we take a look back at significant commencement events throughout our history.

The first commencement for the St. Joseph Junior College was held in 1917, and eight women and two men received diplomas. Information is sparse as to where the ceremonies were held before the junior college moved to 10th and Edmond in St. Joseph in 1933. That building contained an auditorium/gymnasium where commencement ceremonies were held until the college moved to its new campus. No commencement was held in spring 1969.

The first commencement ceremony on the new campus was held on a stage south of the Hearnes Center (then known as the Hearnes Learning Resource Center). It was held in spring 1970 for 45 graduates, and U.S. Sen. Stuart Symington delivered the commencement address. According to the 1970 Griffon Yearbook, "he spoke on the topic of pollution ... the challenges it imposed for youth today." Thunderclouds loomed throughout the ceremony, but the rain held off until after the event.

Several new traditions began that year. An Alumni Association

formed in 1969, and it hosted the first commencement breakfast for the graduates in 1970. (That tradition continued for more than 30 years.) Also, students were led in a procession from the Popplewell Administration Building to the stage by the new-term student body president Dwight Scroggins '76, and vice president Jim Glidewell '71.

By the next year, 1971, the Looney Complex (then known as the HPER building) was completed, and the commencement was held in the new gym. However, students still processed from Popplewell.

The annual ceremony was held in the Looney gym until 1979, when it moved back outside. That year, Spratt Memorial Stadium had just been completed. It was again held in the stadium in 1980, but by 1981, the new addition to the Looney Complex was completed, and the ceremony moved to the new fieldhouse. The commencements continued there until this past May.

Because of growing enrollment, a winter commencement ceremony was added in 1998, and, in 2002, a second spring ceremony was added and continued until the 2014 ceremony.

Winter commencement ceremonies will continue to be held in the Looney Complex arena. ■

Centennial website live

Missouri Western's centennial website is now live at missouriwestern.edu/centennial. Visit it for historical information, video vignettes, a calendar of events and more. You may also nominate someone as a Centennial Notable or share a memory. ■

New commencement traditions in 2014

Three new traditions were part of the spring 2014 commencement ceremony in Spratt Memorial Stadium:

- **March to Commencement.** Students were led by the Griffon Corps, a musical escort, from the Griffon Indoor Sports Complex to the Spratt Stadium field.
- **Phi Sigma Kappa cannon.** At home football games, members of Phi Sigma Kappa fraternity fire "The General" after every Griffon score. The cannon was fired at the end of the 2014 spring commencement ceremony.
- **Griffon for Luck.** It is said that those who ask for the mighty Griffon's protection will be watched over on their quest for education. When prospective students first come to Missouri Western, they are told they can ask for the Griffon's protection by rubbing the head of the Griffon statue in the Office of Admissions. During commencement, that same statue was on the field so students could leave the University as they came in; with one last request for protection and luck on their next quest. ■



COMMUNITY MEMBERS LEAD MISSOURI WESTERN INTO THE *next century*

Four community leaders have agreed to serve as chairs of the comprehensive capital campaign that will be part of Missouri Western's centennial in 2015: R. Dan and Dale Boulware and Dr. Mark and Mary Margaret Laney.

"As we prepare to celebrate 100 years of transforming lives and carry that legacy into the future, we're thrilled that Dan, Dale, Mark and Mary Margaret have agreed at this stage in the planning process to provide leadership for the Centennial Capital Campaign," said Jerry Pickman '85, vice president for University Advancement and executive director of the Missouri Western State University Foundation.

Prior to launching the public phase of the campaign next year, Missouri Western is securing volunteer leadership and further defining campaign goals.

R. Dan Boulware is a partner in the national law firm of Polsinelli and chair of the firm's contingency fee practice. A fellow in the American College of Trial Lawyers, Dan is recognized by his peers as being among the top 1 percent of all trial attorneys in the country, and is admitted to practice before the U.S. Supreme Court and numerous federal and state courts. He received both his bachelor's and law degrees from the University of Kansas. Dan has been actively engaged in the community and is a tireless supporter of Missouri Western. He is a former president of the University's governing board and received an honorary degree from Missouri Western in 2012. The R. Dan Boulware Convocation on Critical Issues, which brings nationally prominent speakers to campus each fall, is named in his honor.

"Missouri Western has served this community with excellence for almost 100 years," he said. "In turn, it is my hope that the community recognizes the need



and importance of investing in Missouri Western's future. We will be involving students, faculty and staff, alumni and our strongest supporters to assist us with the preparation activities needed to successfully launch the Centennial Capital Campaign and address the University's needs."

Dale Boulware was born and raised in New Albany, Miss., and graduated from the University of Memphis with a Bachelor of Science

in Elementary Education. Since moving to St. Joseph in 1981, Dale has played an active civic role, serving in various volunteer leadership capacities for the United Way, Junior League of St. Joseph, the YMCA, the St. Joseph Safety Council and other organizations. Dale has served the University as past president of the Missouri Western Ambassadors. The Boulwares are members of both the Missouri Western State University League for Excellence and the Missouri Western Arts Society.

Dr. Mark Laney has been president and CEO of Heartland Health/Mosaic Life Care since 2009. Previously, Mark served for 20 years at Cook Children's Health Care System, including eight years as the president of the Cook Children's Physician Network. He serves on many boards, including the Mayo Clinic Alumni Association, Institute for Industrial and Applied Life Sciences, the St. Joseph Chamber of Commerce, Community Alliance of St. Joseph, Success by 6 and the Missouri Hospital Association, where he is past president.

Mark earned a bachelor's degree from the University of North Texas in Denton and a Doctor of Medicine from the University of Texas Medical Branch in Galveston. He also completed a Pediatric Neurology Fellowship at Mayo Clinic and received a Master of Science degree in medical management at the University of Texas at Dallas and the University of Texas Southwestern in Dallas.

Mary Margaret Laney was born and raised in Little Rock, Ark. Shortly after high school, she went to work at the University of Arkansas Medical Center. Mary Margaret is a graduate of the Baptist System School of Nursing in Little Rock and is a registered nurse. After a brief stint in the ICU at Baptist Hospital, she transferred to Arkansas Children's Hospital. Mark and Mary Margaret are members of the Missouri Western Arts Society, and Mary Margaret serves on the Society's Board of Directors. She is also a Missouri Western Ambassador.

"I think a community is blessed to have a university in their city," she said. "The students add a flavor to the city that is appealing. The athletic activities, theatre productions, musical concerts, art shows, and other events provide high-caliber entertainment for the community. I look forward to helping raise awareness of all Missouri Western has to offer and to continue to build relationships that will gain the needed funds for this campaign."

"As leaders in the St. Joseph community, the Boulwares and Laney share a great passion for the future of our community and recognize the role Missouri Western plays in the region's prosperity and continued economic growth," Pickman said. "I am truly grateful to partner with such wonderful advocates of our University." ■

Front, Dale Boulware and Mary Margaret Laney; back, R. Dan Boulware and Mark Laney.



Founding dean joins President's Centennial Circle

As the founding dean of the School of Fine Arts, Dr. Robert Willenbrink is already making a difference in the lives of students. But he and his wife wanted to make an even greater difference.

With a pledged gift of \$100,000, Dr. Willenbrink and his wife, Susie, joined the recently established President's Centennial Circle, founded by Drs. Robert and Laurel Vartabedian.

"The Willenbrinks' gift is sincerely appreciated, and their generosity helps us with our Centennial Capital Campaign efforts," said Dr. Robert Vartabedian, Missouri Western's president. "We are grateful for their support and commitment to Missouri Western."

Dr. Willenbrink said the gift is a way of expressing their deep commitment to the University's programs and students. "I believe the capital campaign is important to the future of Missouri Western and to our region."

Although Dr. Willenbrink had only been at the University less than a year when he made the gift, he said it

didn't take him very long to realize that "not only could I make a difference in my job as founding dean, but that a financial contribution would make a substantial difference to the students."

"I am inspired by Missouri Western's mission," he said. "I believe in the University and its programs as much as they believed in me when they hired me."

Dr. Willenbrink said he is most interested in the capital campaign components that benefit the arts facilities, because the arts programs – art, music, theatre, cinema and dance – are in great need of more space. And, he noted, because of the strong impact of the arts on this region. The Arts and Economic Prosperity IV study, conducted by Americans for the Arts, found that more than \$10.8 million was invested in the arts in Buchanan County in 2010 alone, supporting the equivalent of 489 full-time jobs.

Jerry Pickman '85, vice president for University Advancement and the executive director of the Missouri

Western State University Foundation, noted that as Missouri Western begins to prepare for a Centennial Capital Campaign, high participation from employees sends a strong message to other donors.

"The dollar amount of a personal gift from faculty and staff members is not what matters the most," he said. "As we begin to contact major prospective donors, like foundations and corporations, they need confirmation of support from employees as evidence that they should invest in Missouri Western's mission."

Dr. Willenbrink hopes the gift will inspire his fellow employees to reach 75 percent participation.

Pickman noted that there are many ways to give substantial gifts to the University besides an outright cash gift. If anyone is interested in learning about the variety of giving avenues, they can contact the Foundation at (816) 271-5647. ■

Missouri Western merchandise sales increase

Sales of officially licensed merchandise featuring Missouri Western have risen about 35 percent in the last two years, setting a record for retail sales and royalties earned in the fiscal year that ended June 30.

Retail sales of licensed merchandise totaled \$365,000 in fiscal year 2014, compared to \$305,750 in 2013 and \$271,250 in 2012.

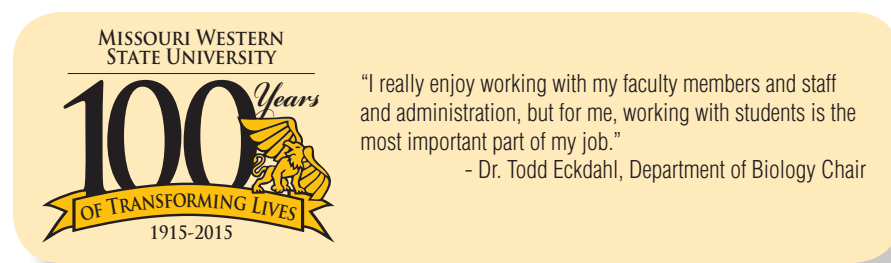
The Rally House locations in St. Joseph, north Kansas City and Independence are the biggest reason for the increase, said Mallory Murray, director of the Office of Public Relations and Marketing. In addition, Apple Market of St. Joseph has recently

added Missouri Western merchandise.

Athletic successes, including three conference championships in three sports in recent years, have contributed to the growing merchandise sales, Murray said.

She also credits the "Paint it Gold" community support campaign, which provided local businesses with free tools to display their pride in Missouri Western, including flags, buttons

and window clings. More than 100 businesses are participating, and more are signing up all the time. Students, faculty, staff and community members are encouraged to "Paint it Gold" each Friday, and the Office of Public Relations and Marketing gives prizes to random people spotted wearing Missouri Western clothing. Businesses interested in participating at no charge can call Murray at 816-271-5649. ■



University embarks on master planning

Missouri Western began a comprehensive master planning initiative this past summer, and a report is scheduled to be available next spring.

"As we look back and celebrate our past 100 years in 2015, it is important that we plan ahead for Missouri Western's second century," said Jerry Pickman '85, vice president for University Advancement and executive director of the Missouri Western State University Foundation. Pickman guided the process of selecting the architectural firm Clark-Huesemann of Lawrence, Kan., for development of the master plan.

He said the plan will establish a framework for physical growth over the next 10 years, and will help guide the University's decisions regarding new construction and renovation, traffic patterns, accessibility, environmental stewardship, parking, land development, and classroom and space utilization.

Ann Pearce, special assistant to the president, is heading a master plan

steering committee. She noted that the University has had master planning initiatives in the past for housing and facility usage, but the last master plan for the entire campus was in 1967, shortly after the property was purchased for the new campus that opened in 1969.

"It's important for us to make sure that we have the physical structure to support student needs into the future," Pearce said. "The process will be thoughtful and very strategic."

A master plan is especially important, Pearce said, since a long-term land lease bill was signed by Gov. Jay Nixon in July. Previously, state law included a sunset clause which prevented most universities from leasing their land beyond 2017. The new law opens up opportunities to enter into long-term leases on campus.

"A master plan will help insure that any of these leases are compatible with our overall mission and possible future needs," she said. ■

New Craig School of Business scholarship

Last spring, the Missouri Western State University Foundation was notified that it was a beneficiary of the estate of Robert (Robbie) Sharp, a 1974 graduate with a Bachelor of Science in Business Administration, Accounting. The Foundation received \$75,000 and will receive approximately another \$15,000 in the future.

The donation is designated for scholarships in the Craig School of Business. Sharp wanted to help provide for educational expenses of students in the CSB, especially accounting majors.

Sharp retired from the accounting department of the U.S. Department of Labor in Kansas City, Mo. ■



Discover Science

A weeklong Discover Science Summer Day Camp for high school students was held on campus in June. It featured creative hands-on lab experiments in the fields of biochemistry and molecular biology. The camp was funded by Boehringer Ingelheim Vetmedica, Inc., and students received a "behind-the-scenes" tour of its St. Joseph facility.

Jerry Partridge '86: A coaching legacy

As a child, Head Football Coach Jerry Partridge '86 spent many a day on the sidelines of the Ruskin (Mo.) High School football field, watching and learning from his dad, the head coach, and dreaming of the day he'd have his own team to coach.

That dream came true when Partridge was tabbed as Missouri Western's head coach in 1997, his first head coaching position.

In his almost two decades in the position, he has made a name for Missouri Western, and his coaching legacy is all over the Griffon record books. Partridge became Missouri Western's all-time wins leader in 2006,

(Michael Hill). Partridge has also coached three MIAA Freshman of the Year award recipients (Mike Jordan, Drew Newhart and Roger Allen) and coached the school's all-time leader in passing (Drew Newhart), tackles (Eric Walker), sacks (David Bass), tackles for a loss (David Bass), rushing yards (Michael Hill) and rushing attempts (Michael Hill).

He has coached more than 240 All-MIAA picks, 25 All-Americans and a national Harlon Hill Award finalist. The Griffon coach set the single-season school record for wins with 12 and has won nine games or more in seven out of the last 10 years. Under his guidance, the Griffons have made the NCAA Playoff four times, which included hosting for the first time in the school's history in 2011. In 2012, the Griffons advanced to the quarterfinals of the NCAA tournament. Four of his players are currently playing in the National Football League.

"The number-one goal is not to win games. It is leading your men to be goal-oriented and better human beings," Partridge said. "Some of my players feel that everything I did as a coach improved them. My goal is for all of them to feel that way."

A graduate assistant coach under Lou Holtz at University of Notre Dame, Partridge says he tries to live by Holtz's words of wisdom: "Praise loudly and criticize softly."

"Kids aren't going to care how much you know until they know how much you care," Partridge says.

When he came to Missouri Western in 1981 as a student athlete, his first impression was the small trees all over campus, but he was also impressed with Spratt Memorial Stadium. It had just opened in 1979, and Partridge said the "grass on the field was tremendous."



Jerry Partridge '86

In his first season on the football team, the Griffons went 8-2 and were ranked fourth in the nation. (The only other times the team was ranked that high were in 2012 and 2013, when Partridge was coaching.)

"College was fun. I'd definitely turn back the clock and do it again," he says. "The teachers knew your name and remembered you. Today, when I see (Charles) Erickson or (Jim) Grechus, it's always a good day." He also has special memories of his college days because he met his wife, Pam, at Missouri Western.

After graduation, Partridge spent several seasons on coaching staffs at three Division I universities and had a five-year stint as defensive coordinator at Missouri Western. He earned a master's degree in sports administration from the University of Missouri.

Partridge's football legacy continued when his son, Travis '13, joined the Missouri Western squad in 2010, and Dad had the opportunity to coach his son.

Travis was born while Partridge was at Austin Peay State University in Tennessee. "His birth was the only shining moment in the 0-11 season," he says with a laugh.

He became head coach at Missouri Western the next season, and, "just like me with my dad," Travis could always be found on the sidelines of Spratt Stadium.

Coaching his son is something Partridge will always cherish. "It was tough at times, but I wouldn't trade the experience for anything," he says. "We'll always have those tremendous moments that can never be taken away."

Partridge doesn't have to think about it when someone asks him to recall the greatest moment of his coaching career: when Travis went over the goal line to beat Northwest Missouri State University and win the conference championship in 2012.

This fall, he again stepped onto the field with his team, continuing his Griffon football legacy for the 18th season.

"I love being involved with the kids," Partridge says. "It's fun to watch them be successful." ■

Gift benefits student athletes

Zack '74 and Mary '76 Workman recently made a pledge over the next five years to the Missouri Western State University Foundation to support the development of an academic resource room in the Griffon Indoor Sports Complex.

Initial plans include converting a break-out room to a study room with computers and a place for mentors to work with student athletes. More equipment and computers will be added each year.

"The new student center will give the student athletes a place to call home where they have access to support, guidance and technology that will allow them to perform at the highest level on and off the field," Zack said. "Study habits, researching topics of interest and communication skills are a must if they are going to be successful."

Kurt McGuffin, director of Athletics, said he has been wanting a centralized location for student athletes to study and work with tutors and mentors, and he is pleased that the Workmans have agreed to fund it.

"I wish we had 1,000 people like them," McGuffin said. "It's not just the monetary support, it's the time volunteering and supporting us through good and bad."

Mary and Zack, who was a Griffon football player, own Lawns Unlimited, Inc. in Cameron, Mo., and Mary is a retired teacher.

McGuffin said the department's increased efforts to mentor and tutor student athletes in the past two years has paid off. The fall 2013 and spring 2014 grade point averages for the approximately 275 student athletes were the highest on record for Missouri Western, and the retention rate increased 12 percent to 66 percent from the 2012-13 academic year, also the highest on record.

"This room will only help us to improve," McGuffin said.

"The experience Mary and I obtained at Missouri Western provided us with more than we ever realized when we graduated," Zack said. "We received a great educational experience and connections that have lasted a lifetime. Now it is our time to give back." ■



The Griffon Indoor Sports Complex will house an academic resource room for student athletes, thanks to a generous gift from Zack '74 and Mary '76 Workman.

Softball wins first-ever MIAA Tournament Championship



The softball team made history in 2014 by winning the MIAA tournament title, beating the Northeastern Oklahoma RiverHawks 12-0. The Griffons also made their seventh NCAA Tournament appearance and finished the season with a 39-18 record.

The 2014 season also marked the end of the line for the most dominant pitcher in program history. Jackie Bishop completed her senior season with a 26-10 record and holds Missouri Western softball career records for wins (96), strikeouts (977), innings pitched (828), appearances (142), complete games (105) and shutouts (29). Additionally, the two-time MIAA Pitcher of the Year (including 2014) holds Griffon single-season records for strikeouts (291) and shutouts (12).

Athletics Hall of Fame Class of 2014

Join us Oct. 3 and 4 as we honor the Athletics Hall of Fame Class of 2014: John Chavez, track and field, 1960-62; Mitch Mason, football, 1993-96; Darroll Wright, men's basketball, 1994-95; and the 1994-95 women's basketball team.

Bishop was named First-Team All American by the National Fast Pitch Coaches Association (NFCA), Second-Team All-American by Daktronics, and Central Region Pitcher of the Year. She was also named MIAA Freshman of the Year in 2011.

Tiffany Gillaspay was a First-Team All-MIAA selection for the first time in her career. Gillaspay got a hit in 23 of her last 25 games and had a 19-game hitting streak during that run. She also hit safely in 45 of the Griffons' 57 games this season. Gillaspay was named to the National Fastpitch Coaches Association Central Region First Team.

The Griffons, coached by Jen Trotter, have won 30+ games in four straight seasons. ■

A reception will be held Friday, Oct. 3 at the Stoney Creek Inn in St. Joseph, and the induction ceremony brunch will take place Oct. 4 in the Fulkerson Center. Cost is \$25. The Wendy's Hall of Fame game will be

Baseball reaches MIAA Tournament finals in 2014

The baseball team, coached by Buzz Verduzco, overcame a slow and injury-filled start to catch fire and enter a stretch run that concluded in the finals of the MIAA Baseball Tournament Championship in Springfield, Mo. The Griffons fell short in the final game against Emporia State, but finished 2014 with a 32-20 record. This was a strong finish considering the team was 8-10 at one point.

First-year outfielder Ryan Degner led the Griffons offensively with a .383 average and was named a Third-Team All-American by the American Baseball Coaches Association. Degner led the Griffons in almost all offensive categories, hitting a team high (.383) and finishing the season getting a hit in 11 of his last 12 games. He led the team in hits (74), runs scored (46), doubles (16), total bases (124), slugging percentage (.642), on base percentage (.448), stolen bases (19) and RBI (49).

He had a hit in 41 of the Griffons' 52 games this season, which includes getting four hits in a game three times. Degner had a season-best six RBIs against the Northeastern State RiverHawks. He was also named to the Second-team All-MIAA. ■

against Pittsburg State at 6 p.m. in Spratt Memorial Stadium.

For more information or to make a reservation for the Oct. 4 brunch, call (816) 271-4481 by Sept. 20. ■



Travis Partridge '13 and Jackie Bishop

Student athletes honored

The Missouri Western Department of Athletics, in conjunction with the St. Joseph News-Press, celebrated the success of its student athletes both on and off of the field as part of the 15th annual Missouri Western State University/St. Joseph News-Press Student Athlete Honors Banquet in April. Football player Travis Partridge '13 was named Male Student Athlete of the Year and softball player Jackie Bishop was named Female Student Athlete of the Year.

Partridge and Bishop were selected from a Student Athlete of the Year that was named for each sport. Those student athletes included Calvin Balque, men's basketball; David Chew, baseball; Derek Hawkins, men's golf; Tiffanie Abrams, women's basketball; Alexa Adams, women's soccer; Alyssa Dougan, women's tennis; Erica Rottinghaus, volleyball; Shelby Stone '14, women's golf; and Emily Thomson, cheer squad. ■

Get involved in Griffon Athletics!

Love the Griffons? The Athletics Department has a variety of ways you can get involved and support them:

1. Join the **Gold Coat Victory Fund**, which provides needed funding to keep our programs among the most competitive in NCAA Division II. By joining the Gold Coat Victory Fund, you'll also have access to season tickets to Griffon sports, preferred parking opportunities, access to improved club areas at home football and basketball games, football sideline passes, fitness center access, social invitations and much more. For more information, call Brett Esely at (816) 271-4481, email esely@missouriwestern.edu or visit gogriffons.com.
2. Join **Club MAX**, the official kids club for the 12 and under crowd. For only \$10 a year, Club MAX members receive a club t-shirt, a membership card that allows them free admission to all home football and basketball games, opportunities to interact with Griffon student athletes, Club MAX

e-newsletter and much more. Join at gogriffons.com or call (816) 271-5926.

3. Join the **Legacy Club** for letterwinners at Missouri Western. Any student athlete who completed one year in an intercollegiate varsity sport at Missouri Western is eligible. Membership dues are \$100 per year and include one season ticket to all regular-season home games. Join online at gogriffons.com or call (816) 271-5926.
4. **Paint it Gold.** We encourage everyone to wear Griffon gear every Friday. During football season, tweet us your best picture or post on Facebook and you could win gift cards and other prizes from Griffon corporate partners. Shop for Griffon gear at gogriffons.com, click on Team Store.
5. **Cheer for our teams.** Check out gogriffons.com for all sports schedules, and we'll see you at the game! ■

Two more Griffons join pro ranks

Football players Reggie Jordan '14 and Travis Partridge '13 became the latest Missouri Western alumni to join the professional football ranks. Jordan, a three-year starter at tight end, signed a free-agent contract with the Jacksonville Jaguars in May 2014, while Partridge, a three-year starting quarterback for the Griffons, inked with the Minnesota Vikings. After being released by Minnesota, Partridge landed with the BC Lions of the Canadian Football League.

The duo joins a growing list of recent Griffon grads in the pros: NFL players Greg Zuerlein '13 (St. Louis Rams), Michael Hill '13 (Green Bay Packers) and David Bass (Chicago Bears). Former Griffon baseball players Michael Schulze and Grant Fink are with the St. Louis Cardinals organization and the Cleveland Indians organization, respectively, while 2006 graduate Brice Garnett is competing in his first full year on the PGA tour (see an alumni profile about Garnett on the next page). ■

Brice Garnett '06: On a course for success

Next time you're watching a golf tournament on the PGA Tour, look for Brice Garnett '06, a Missouri Western alumnus who advanced into the PGA Tour ranks this season.

"It's the best job in the world. I get to play the best golf courses in the world," Garnett says. "I wouldn't trade it for anything."

Garnett has been playing professional golf since he graduated from Missouri Western with a Bachelor of Science in Business Administration, Finance degree.

The Gallatin, Mo. native started on the Adams Tour in 2006, which, in Major League Baseball terms, is equivalent to the minor league. In 2010, he made his way through PGA Tour Qualifying School to get Web.com tour-playing privileges, equivalent to AAA. Garnett played four years on the Web.com tour. He finished inside the top 25 on the year-end money list, which graduated him to the majors, the PGA Tour.

"I'm very pleased with the way my rookie year has progressed," he says. "Being a rookie presents so many challenges week to week, but I have played some consistent golf and made 15 out of 20 cuts so far this year."

Garnett began his path to a professional career when his father introduced him to the sport at age 5. "I was always playing sports around the house and always active, but for some reason I really fell in love with golf and wanted to play nonstop," he says. "By

age 10, I was at the golf course in Gallatin all day, every day in the summer. There were six or eight of us who spent the days playing golf and then jumping in the pool to cool off. They are still some of my best friends."

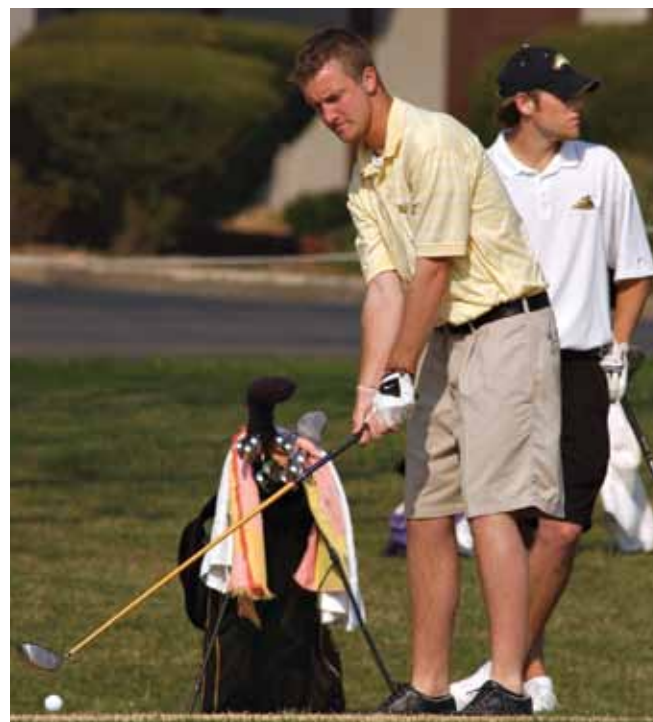
A golf scholarship brought him to Missouri Western, but a degree in finance was his main goal. "Being involved in the stock market and managing money was going to be my career," he says.

But in the meantime, his golf game continued to improve. In the last year and a half of his collegiate career, he won 12 times, and his father suggested he consider a career as a professional golfer.

"Playing golf for a living is different than any other professional sport. It's all performance based. Unlike other professional athletes signing major contracts, golfers play for their paycheck and job each week, which can be a major stressor."

But he loves traveling, being his own boss and controlling his own fate. "Golf, being an individual sport, takes a major toll mentally, so finding a balance of staying sharp mentally and physically is a challenge," Garnett says. "No one on the PGA Tour takes it easy on you if you aren't!"

Garnett was named All-America three years at Missouri Western and



Brice Garnett '06

was the first-ever MIAA Player of the Year in 2006. He was named MIAA All-Conference every year he played for Missouri Western, and MIAA Conference Champion for three years. Garnett was inducted into the MIAA Hall of Fame class of 2014 this past summer, only the second Griffon to earn that honor (former men's basketball coach Tom Smith was the first). He joined the Missouri Western Athletics Hall of Fame in 2012.

For now, Garnett's goals are to improve every day, but have fun playing the game. He hopes to finish in the top 125 on FedExCup points to keep his PGA Tour card. And, of course, he has the goal of winning on the Tour.

"I feel like I have worked very hard to be where I am in my golfing career and personal life. I am very fortunate to be given this opportunity, and I am enjoying the awesome ride!" ■

From the Alumni Association President

Greetings Griffis,

Like many of you, I graduated, moved away and did not return to Missouri Western. My oldest son went to a large university for his degree, but Zach, my youngest, wanted to be a Griffon. When we attended the freshman registration program, I realized what a great University we are.

The contrast in the education my sons received was vivid. Both schools have to meet the same accreditation standards. But my oldest son sat in huge lecture halls, and if he needed help, he talked to a teaching assistant. At Missouri Western, Zach had small classes and faculty who not only knew who he was, but were willing to help him. His experience at Missouri Western was so positive that my daughter Courtney joined him on campus a few years later.

Mixing this quality education with the ability to learn lessons outside the classroom in a unique city like St. Joseph is special. Yes, other colleges have



David Slater '82

graduated Federal Reserve Bank presidents, but only Missouri Western graduated Esther George '80, current president of the Federal Reserve Bank of Kansas City.

Other universities might have graduated Division I football coaches, but only St. Joseph Junior College shaped Bill Snyder '59 into the man who could take Kansas State University, with one of the worst records in the nation, and make it elite (see p. 27).

If you ever need a pick-me-up, Google Paul Rhoads '89 at Iowa State University and see how he takes young men and makes them ready to do what it takes to win.

There is something special about being a Griffon. Call up some old friends and come on back for a visit. You will be glad you did.

David Slater

David Slater '82

Proud parent of two Griffon graduates
Faithful, Proud and True



Alumni Day 2014

Coming Events

Sept. 20 | Family Day, Griffons Vs. Northeastern State University RiverHawks, 6 p.m., Spratt Stadium.

Sept. 25 | Griffon football at Lindenwood University. Join the St. Louis Alumni chapter at 4:30 p.m. for a no-host dinner at Trailhead Brewery. Pick up your car flag and caravan to the 6:15 p.m. game. Purchase game tickets through Lindenwood's Department of Athletics.

Oct. 3-5, 9-11 | "Of Mice and Men," Potter Hall theater.

Oct. 4 | Hall of Fame game, Griffons vs. Pittsburg State University, 6 p.m.

Oct. 24-25 | Homecoming, see p. 26.

Nov. 4 | 21st Annual R. Dan Boulware Convocation on Critical Issues featuring Dr. Douglas Brinkley, 10 a.m., Looney Complex.

Nov. 13-16 | "The Pirates of Penzance," Potter Hall theater.

Nov. 23-30 | Fall Break (no classes/campus closed).

Dec. 13 | Commencement, 11 a.m., Looney Complex.

Dec. 13-Jan. 9 | Wintersession.

Dec. 24-Jan. 1 | Campus closed.

Check out the details for all alumni events at missouriwestern.edu/alumni, click on Upcoming Events.



As Presented on Broadway by New York Shakespeare Festival, Joseph Papp, Producer
Directed by Wilford Leach
Musical Adaptation by William Elliot
Choreography by Graciela Daniele

MISSOURI WESTERN
STATE UNIVERSITY
100 Years
OF TRANSFORMING LIVES
1915-2015

"The Missouri Western faculty, administration, staff and students are a very important part of the community."

- Dan Danford '78, Founder/CEO, Family Investment Center



Griffons Around the World HOMECOMING 2014

Friday, October 24

5th Annual Alumni Golf Tournament, 10 a.m. shotgun start, Fairview Golf Course. \$40 per person by Oct. 1.

Griffon Soccer vs. University of Central Mo., 4 p.m. in Spratt Memorial Stadium.

32nd Alumni Awards Banquet, 5:30 p.m. reception, 6:15 p.m. dinner, Fulkerson Center.

Distinguished Alumni Award: Bob Vecchione '75 and Captain Keith Hoskins '88

Graduate of the Last Decade (GOLD) Award: John Fabsits '04

Distinguished Faculty Award: Dr. Susie Hennessey, Professor of French

Herb '35 & Peggy Iffert Outstanding Service to the University Award: Carlos and Carol Moya

Griffon Volleyball vs. Missouri Southern, 7 p.m. in the Fieldhouse

Pep Rally, 8:30 p.m., Griffon Indoor Sports Complex. Bonfire follows outside.

Saturday, October 25

Homecoming Parade, 9:30 a.m., downtown St. Joseph. Alumni and their families are invited to walk with the Alumni Association float. Meet at Union Street and Frederick Ave. no later than 9 a.m.

Arts, Beats, and Treats FREE Family Fun, following the parade, Remington Hall.

Kids can make crafts, run an awesome obstacle course, make their own Griffon Mix and enjoy a photo booth! See Casey's Creatures, too!

Black and Gold Renewal Tailgate, 11:30 a.m., Lot H near the Baker Family Fitness Center.

Meet the deans and faculty from the Craig School of Business, College of Liberal Arts and Sciences, College of Professional Studies, School of Fine Arts, and the Graduate School. The Alumni Board will be grillin'.

You can also bring your own tailgate. *(Please note that alcohol is now allowed at tailgate functions. Consumption should be out of paper or plastic cups. No glass bottles are allowed on campus.)*

Football Reunion and Tailgate, Lot I, \$10 per person.

Join other football alumni and their families. Advance registration is required; call (816) 271-5646.

Griffon Football, 2 p.m., Spratt Memorial Stadium.

Griffons vs. Hornets of Emporia State University, the MIAA Game of the Week. ■

Register online at missouriwestern.edu/alumni/upcoming-events or call (816) 271-5646.

Bill Snyder '59: Distinguished Alumnus

Bill Snyder '59, head football coach at Kansas State University in Manhattan, was honored with the Missouri Western Alumni Association Distinguished Alumni Award at the student athlete awards banquet last spring.

Snyder, a native of St. Joseph, attended St. Joseph Junior College and earned his bachelor of arts degree from William Jewell College in Liberty, Mo. in 1963, where he was a three-year letter-winner as a defensive back. He began his full-time coaching career in 1964 as an assistant at Indio High School in California and earned his master's degree from Eastern New Mexico University in 1965.

In 1974, Snyder became the offensive coordinator and head swimming coach at Austin College in Sherman, Texas. He joined the University of North Texas staff in 1976 and helped author an impressive turnaround with a three-year record of 26-7. He left UNT for the University of Iowa in 1979, where he served as offensive coordinator.

Snyder became head coach at Kansas State in 1989, and the team went 1-10 that first season. He has since created a

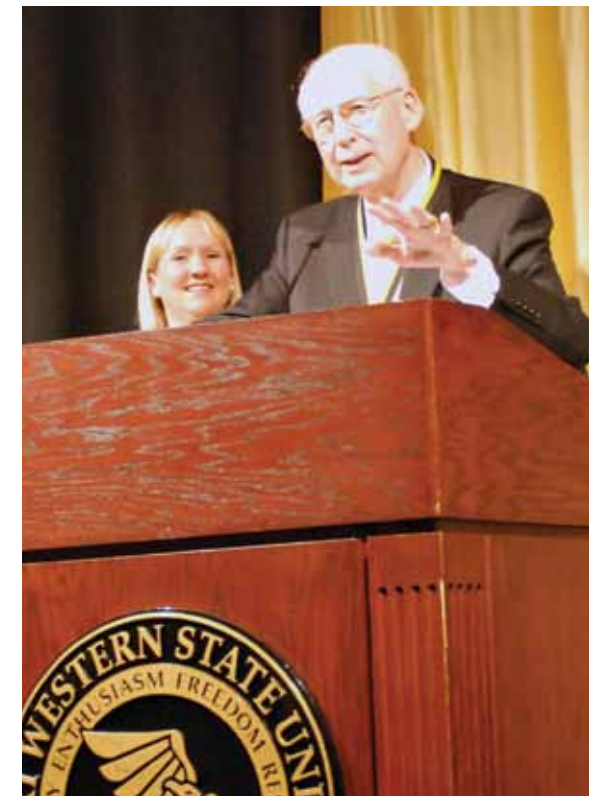
177-80-1 record with 15 bowl games. He led Kansas State to 11 straight bowl games between the 1993 and 2003 seasons, making the university one of only seven programs in the nation to appear in the postseason every year during that stretch.

He left Kansas State in 2005 and returned in November 2008.

While coaching at Kansas State, he has earned eight national Coach of the Year Awards and seven Conference Coach of the Year Awards, and is ranked 12th nationally in wins among active coaches. He has coached nine Consensus First-Team All-American selections, 79 First-Team All-Conference selections and 108 First-Team Academic All-conference selections.

"I've known Bill Snyder nearly all my life," said Charlie Burri '55, former Missouri Western athletic director who introduced Snyder at the banquet. "As far as native sons go, I think we can place him on the top of the list."

Distinguished Alumni Award recipients are normally honored at Homecoming, but Snyder was unable to attend because of his game schedule in the fall. ■



Bill Snyder '59



The Department of Psychology is celebrating the 25th anniversary of the Psi Chi Chapter at an alumni banquet at 6:30 p.m. Oct. 3 in Spratt Hall Enright Rooms, 214/216. If you did not receive an invitation but want to attend, contact Stena in the psychology office at (816) 271-4444.

Junior College Reunion

Susan (Schmidt) Smith '64, Tom Schneider '64 and Twila (Pittsenbarger) Halter '64 joined the Golden Griffon Society for 50-year graduates at the St. Joseph Junior College Reunion in June. Reunion activities included lunch, a tour of the Walter Cronkite Memorial and "The Music Man" performance.

MISSOURI WESTERN FAMILY LEGACIES

For this issue, we queried Kurt Lee Killen '81, senior vice president of Physician Specialty Resources, and his son, Matt, who is a sophomore business/marketing major. The family lives in Platte Woods, Mo.

WHY DID YOU CHOOSE MISSOURI WESTERN?

Kurt My high school band director, who had just been named the new director at Missouri Western (William Mack), asked me if I'd like a music scholarship. Since I had to pay for college out of my own pocket, it seemed like a great idea.

Matt I came to Missouri Western to be part of the percussion program. I hope to one day own a venue for bands to perform, with a bar and restaurant.

FAVORITE SPOT ON CAMPUS?

Kurt We had so many fun activities at the Rathskeller (in the Blum Union basement) that I'd have to rate it number one. Second on the list would be the basketball gym. I was fortunate to be in charge of the keys to the gym, and we would play basketball late at night a couple times a week.

Matt The football field.

BEST STUDENT EXPERIENCE?

Kurt I was placed in a number of leadership positions. The experience proved of significant value in later life.

Matt The best experience so far has been participating in the Extreme Percussion show.

FAVORITE PROFESSOR?

Kurt Dr. Frank Kessler was my advisor and has since become a family friend. He is a good man about the right things.

Matt My favorite professor is Dr. Dennis Rogers. I've been taking drum lessons from him since I was in grade school. He is not only a great percussion instructor but a great life coach. It's like having your own personal Yoda.

ONE OR TWO WORDS TO DESCRIBE MISSOURI WESTERN?

Kurt Opportunity and value.

Matt Opportunity.

WHAT IS ONE THING ON YOUR BUCKET LIST?

Kurt To attend every major league park. (I have two left.)

Matt I would like to one day own property in Hawaii.

WHAT DO YOU DO FOR FUN?

Kurt I work out every day. I try to read at least 50 books a year. Two years ago I decided to learn to play golf.

Matt For fun, I play the drums.

And, two final questions for Kurt:

WHAT DO YOU MISS THE MOST ABOUT BEING A STUDENT?

I miss the friends I made in college. I'm still close to a number of them. Actually, I've never stopped being a student. I'm also always registered in some type of class. Right now I'm working on my Master's in Theological Studies.

WHAT ADVICE DO YOU HAVE FOR CURRENT STUDENTS?

I have two pieces of advice: First, if you are thinking about dropping out, don't. Stick with it. You will appreciate the fact that you stuck with it. Second, take advantage of the opportunities in front of you and get a tremendous education. It is up to you. ■



Matt and Kurt '81 Killen

Museum director leaves a legacy of history education

Jackie Lewin '66 had been immersed in St. Joseph history for more than four decades when she retired as executive director of the St. Joseph Museums this past spring.

Her degree from the Missouri Western Junior College took her to Northwest Missouri State University, where she received a Bachelor of Science in Education degree with a political science major and a history minor, and a Master of Science in History degree with an emphasis in American History. While pursuing a teaching career, Lewin started working part-time at the St. Joseph Museums and found her calling.

She was with the museums since 1973 and served as executive director since 2006.

"I feel really fortunate in that I've had a career that I really liked," she said. "A museum is a place where people are learning all the time, and it's been fun."

Her proudest accomplishments include her role in the development and management of the Pony Express National Museum, which opened in 1993, the re-accreditation with the American Association of Museums and serving as the director when St. Joseph Museums celebrated its 80th anniversary in 2007.

Lewin said she is also pleased with the museums' relationship with Missouri Western, as many partnerships have developed between the two over the years.

The University's academic departments have always been involved in the museums' Super Science Saturday from its beginning, and since 2011, the annual event has been held in Remington and Agenstein halls on campus. Additionally, new students spend a day volunteering at the museums as part of the University's Griffon Edge orientation each year.

The museums have also provided internship opportunities for students in history, graphic design, education and recreation fields. Last year, Jeremy Lyons '14 created a video and website for the Black Archives Museum as part of his master's thesis at Missouri Western.

"It's a great source of people with talent and skills, and it gives us an opportunity to show students the museum field," she said of the internships. "Missouri Western has helped us in a lot of ways."

Lewin's love of history won't stop with her retirement, she says. She has a book project in the works, and plans to organize correspondence from her father when he was in World War II.

"I'm going to miss it, but I'm looking forward to new things." ■



Jackie Lewin '66

In the beginning

The connection between St. Joseph Museums and Missouri Western dates back to 1927, when Orrel Andrews, a professor at St. Joseph Junior College, and her students' Natural Science Club helped found a Children's Museum. That museum eventually became the St. Joseph Museum.

The following is an excerpt from the 1927 Griffon Yearbook about the Natural Science Club, which was formed in 1923: "Undoubtedly, the most important phase of its work is that, under the inspiration and guidance of its able sponsor, Miss Orrel M. Andrews, it has laid the foundation for the future founding of a Children's Museum in St. Joseph. The nucleus of this project, consisting of various interesting and valuable biological collections at present belonging to the club, will be temporarily housed at the New City Hall." ■



"Missouri Western has been my favorite place of all time."
- Shirley Bradley,
Community Member

1970s

Christel Marquardt '70 was recognized as the American Business Women's Association Career Chapter 2014 Woman of Distinction. Marquardt served as a Kansas Court of Appeals judge for 17 years and was the first woman president of the Kansas Bar Association.

Dr. Molly (Kelley) Pierce '77 was named director of community relations at East Hills Shopping Center in St. Joseph.

1980s

Laura (Hartell) Ozenberger '80 was appointed to the Board of Directors of Elecsys Corporation. She is the former general counsel and was a senior executive of Inergy, where she spent more than 10 years working as a member of the executive leadership team. Prior to that, she worked at Sprint in the legal and finance departments. She earned a Juris Doctorate from the University of Missouri School of Law.

Karen Glennon '82 was inducted into the 2014 Kansas Teachers Hall of Fame. Glennon is the Success for All facilitator at Atchison Elementary School in Atchison, Kan.

Dr. Mark D. Woodhull '83 was promoted to full professor and named chair of the business department at Schreiner University in Kerrville, Texas. He had been serving as director of Graduate Business Studies.

Don Robson '89 was presented with the 2014 Outstanding Teaching Award at Concordia University, Nebraska. Robson is the chair of the art department. Students nominate full-time faculty members for the award, and a committee of students and faculty members who have received the award select the recipient.

1990s

Dan Lentz '90 received a Ph.D. in Instructional Management and Leadership from Robert Morris University in Moon Township, Penn. His dissertation topic was, "Using Principles of Differentiated Instruction to Improve Professional Development." He is principal of Fox Chapel High School in Pennsylvania.

Toby Cummings '91 is the executive director of the National Association for Campus Activities. In this role, Cummings oversees and administers activities, programs and services; provides strategic counsel and support to the Board of Directors and the Foundation Board of Trustees; manages and develops staff members; and provides budget oversight among other responsibilities.

Matt McDonald '96 & '11 was recognized as Volunteer of the Year for 2013 in the Missouri Department of Conservation's Northwest Missouri Region for teaching hunter education classes. He was also recognized as St. Joseph Volunteer of the Year in 2012. He has been teaching hunter education classes for 14 years.

Kwanza Humphrey '98 held an exhibit of his work, "Naturally Human," at the Albrecht-Kemper Museum of Art in St. Joseph, Mo.

Jennifer Huffman '99 graduated with a Master of Arts in Information Science and Learning Technologies from the University of Missouri-Columbia. She is employed with the U.S. Court of Appeals 8th Circuit Library in Kansas City, Mo.

2000s



Erika (Strasser) '01 and Joshua '02 Albin announce the birth of twins, Zechariah Andrew and Sylvanie Gale, born Sept. 19, 2013. They join older brothers Seth and Eli.

Morgan (Anderson) Conn '02 accepted a paralegal position with the United States Courts Federal Public Defender's Office for the Northern and Southern Districts of Iowa. For the last eight years, she was an asset forfeiture paralegal under contract with the United States Attorney's Office for the Southern District of Iowa.

Alyssa (Holyfield) Groeteke '04 published a new book, "Love is a Fire," and it is available on Amazon.



Charity (Cordray) Banko '05 and her husband, Nick, announce the birth of their second daughter, Penelope Rae, born April 14, 2014.

Candice Day Quarles '05 and her husband, Jeremiah, were featured on HGTV's "House Hunters" when they were searching for their first home.

Lavon Schaffner '05 & '07 and Doug Whitby were married March 15, 2014 in Gilbert, Ariz.

Joey Stone '05 and Heather Waggle were married May 24, 2014.

Nicolas '06 and Amanda (Gonzalez) '07 Thyfault announce the birth of a son, Alexander Nicolas, born Feb. 25, 2014. He is joined by a sister, Catherine. The family resides in Independence, Mo.

Two former professors pass away

Dr. Norma Hayes Bagnall, professor of English at Missouri Western from 1980-1996 died Feb. 26, 2014. She went to college at the age of 39 after raising her children and putting her husband through school. Dr. Bagnall began her work as a college professor at the age of 50. She is the author of "On Shaky Ground: The New Madrid Earthquakes of 1811-1812." She was a two-term president of the international Children's Literature Association 1989-91. Bagnall was also a Fulbright Scholar, taking a year to study and teach in the United Kingdom.

Michael L. Magoon of Osprey, Fla., died August 4, 2013. He taught German at Missouri Western from 1973-99. After earning his master's degree at the University of Missouri-Columbia, he returned to his hometown to become a professor at Missouri Western, where he was known as "Herr Magoon." Retiring early, he spent a lot of time developing his passion for photography and his love for the outdoors, fishing and mushroom hunting. ■



Austin '08 and Laura (Hurst) '10 & '14 Nold announce the birth of a daughter, Elliana, born June 19, 2013. Laura earned a Master of Science in Nursing Health Care Leadership degree from Missouri Western in May 2014.

Mary Stone Dockery '09 was appointed an editor at Sundress Publications, a publishing collective. She also recently published "The Dopamine Letters," her second poetry chapbook. Dockery, an instructor of English at Missouri Western, has also published two collections of poetry.

Summer Gemmell '09 earned a Doctor of Osteopathic Medicine from Lake Erie College of Osteopathic Medicine in Erie, Pa. She began her residency program in internal medicine July 2014 in Ohio.

2010s

Kellie (Alexander) Asher '11 graduated with a doctorate in Physical Therapy from the University of Missouri-Columbia. She and her husband live in Harrisburg, Mo., and she practices in Boonville, Mo.

Kayla (Aucutt) Bachman '11 and her husband, Luke, announce the birth of a daughter, Gracelyn Averie, born Feb. 11, 2014.

Katie (Roebeling) Pearson '11 is art director at Salva O'Renicks in Kansas City, Mo. The team's campaign for Compass Minerals recently won Best in Show and awards for multimedia and print design excellence from the National Agri-Marketing Association in a regional awards competition. The campaign also won two national first-place awards.

Andy Tyhurst '12 is the artistic/entertainment director at Paradise Playhouse Dinner Theatre and Events Center in Excelsior Springs, Mo.

Morgan Lindgren '13 is a leadership consultant for Alpha Sigma Alpha sorority. Lindgren was a member of the Zeta Mu chapter at Missouri Western. ■

Leslie Blakley '95: On the air

Want the "best care on the air?" Then you want Leslie Blakley '95, who has been producing and hosting a 15-minute radio show that keeps her listeners informed about everything related to health care.

The show, which has an interview format, airs twice a week on KAIR Country 93.7 FM out of Atchison, Kan. Topics for the shows have run the gamut from dental care to healthy feet, and everything in between. "My guests are the experts. I just ask them questions that I think others want to know."

Five years ago, Atchison County was ranked last out of all 105 Kansas counties in healthy living behaviors, and Atchison Hospital, where Blakley is surgery manager, began a number of initiatives to try to improve the county's ranking. One of the initiatives was the radio program, and they asked Blakley to host it. She has been on the air for three years.

"We've concentrated a lot on what people can do to control their own behaviors, on what they can do to contribute to their own healthy lifestyles," she said. "We talk about anything that will help the health of the community."

Blakley's show started out at 8:30 a.m. on Sundays, and hospital personnel decided to add a 12:30 p.m. Wednesday time slot within the first year.



In the latest county rankings for healthy behaviors, Atchison County has moved up and is no longer in last place, and Blakley hopes her program has played a part in that. Listeners have told her they have made appointments for screenings and tests after hearing her program, and others have asked about getting a

recording from a program so someone they know can hear it.

"I do this because it makes a difference and it's important," she says. "If it makes a difference in one person's life, it's worth it. The program is patient advocacy at its best."

Blakley earned a diploma in nursing from Research Hospital and Medical Center in Kansas City, Mo., and has worked in operating rooms her entire career. She returned to school 20 years after her diploma and earned her Bachelor of Science in Nursing degree from Missouri Western while working full time. Blakley has been surgical manager at 25-bed Atchison Hospital since 2003.

To recognize her commitment, the hospital recently featured her on a billboard at the intersection of Highways 59 and 45 near Atchison.

"I don't want to be remembered for my radio show," Blakley says. "I want to be remembered for making a difference." ■

Michelle Yue Zhang '14 earned a master's degree in English from Xidian University and a Master of Applied Arts in Written Communication degree from Missouri Western. She was the first student to complete the coursework since the two universities signed an agreement in 2012. Zhang completed coursework at Xidian, then spent a year completing coursework at Missouri Western. ■

In Memory

We honor 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.

Ernestine Babcock ’73, St. Joseph, Mo., July 28, 2013.

Joseph L. Bliley ’74, Kansas City, Mo., Feb. 1, 2014.

Jim D. Brand ’73, St. Joseph, Mo., March 4, 2014.

Joseph W. Carter Jr ’76, Maryville, Mo., March 15, 2014.

Rev. Carroll “Sid” Clark ’56, St. Joseph, Mo., Jan. 27, 2014.

Joan K. (Murray) Colliver ’88, St. Joseph, Mo., April 20, 2014.

Violet “Jane” Constable ’88, St. Joseph, Mo., June 6, 2014.

Roger L. Fisher ’48, St. Joseph, Mo., April 16, 2014.

Lori A. (Bittinger) Godfrey ’00, St. Joseph, Mo., March 6, 2014.

George R. Hicks ’93, St. Joseph, Mo., May 25, 2014.

James M. Jones ’60, St. Joseph, Mo., Feb. 6, 2014.

Joyce A. (Kent) Jones ’82, St. Joseph, Mo., May 23, 2014.

Caroline Sue “Susie” (Jones) Lawson ’97, St. Joseph, Mo., March 8, 2014.

Clyde D. Leake ’79, St. Joseph, Mo., Feb. 5, 2014.

Michael S. Lord ’03, Sikeston, Mo., March 9, 2014.

Rex Junior Lyon ’55, New Hampton, Mo., June 15, 2014.

Robert William “Bob” Morrison ’96, Weatherby, Mo., March 11, 2014.

Rodney C. Radmer Sr. ’73, St. Joseph, Mo., June 21, 2014.

Mildred I. “Mickey” (Morris) Stewart ’05, St. Joseph, Mo., Feb. 19, 2014.

Nancy L. (Coon) Teeter ’89, Stewartville, Mo., May 29, 2014.

James L. Riggs ’75, St. Joseph, Mo., May 1, 2014. ■

Tell us what’s new!

Name _____ Maiden _____ Class of _____

Spouse _____ Class of _____ Alum’s Birthday _____

Address _____ City, State _____ Zip _____

Phone: Home _____ Cell _____ email _____

What’s New _____

Return to: Alumni Services Office, 4525 Downs Drive, St. Joseph, MO 64507
Submit your news online at missouriwestern.edu/alumni/submit-an-alumnote or email mwalumni@missouriwestern.edu.

BIG DOGS ON CAMPUS

There are big dogs on campus, and then there are big dogs on campus. The furry and lovable kind were on campus helping to relieve student stress during spring 2014 finals week, thanks to Dr. Melinda Kovacs and her two therapy dogs, Bailey and Chandler.

The dogs took turns coming to campus for about an hour every day of finals, offering “an unconditionally loving, supportive furry presence to comfort those who are taking a break,” said Dr. Kovacs, assistant professor of political science. Ninety students, faculty and staff took advantage of the canine therapy.

“It’s definitely a stress reliever to come in, pet the dog and forget about finals for a while,” said student Ali Moore, who was in the middle of writing three essays and a speech as part of her finals. “I have two dogs at home, and being at school without them is lonely.”

“It’s an absolute win, win, win,” Dr. Kovacs said. “It’s great for those who visit, it’s great for me, and the dogs love having someone new to pet them.”

Dr. Kovacs adopted Chandler, an Australian shepherd and chow chow mix, in 2003. In 2008, Chandler was going blind, so she adopted Bailey, an Australian shepherd and Brittany mix.

She originally started taking Chandler into schools so children could read to him. (Research has shown children

who read to a dog once a week for a semester will catch up two grades in reading competency by the end of the semester.) However, part of her handler training was at an assisted living facility, and she says she fell in love with the people and the setting. Today, she takes one of her dogs to a nursing home in St. Joseph once a week, and to church with her every Sunday to help with the children’s lesson.

Dr. Kovacs is a member of Pet Partners, a national nonprofit organization promoting therapy, service and companion animals (including dogs, cats, guinea pigs, birds, miniature horses and llamas). There are more than 11,000 handler/animal teams in the organization.

In 2009, Dr. Kovacs received her evaluator’s license from Pet Partners, so she now organizes evaluations of animals and trainers for other Pet Partners.

The response was so great that Missouri Western’s Counseling Center is working with Dr. Kovacs to regularly schedule the dogs on campus, perhaps during midterms and finals. Others have talked to her about becoming handlers, and she’d like to start a Pet Partners group in the community.

“It’s quite an addiction because it’s so wonderful,” Dr. Kovacs says of her therapy dogs. “I come from an incredibly long line of people who are crazy about animals.” ■





Missouri Western State University

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Spring 2014 Commencement – in the Spratt Memorial Stadium!

Carol Roevers, top left, receives an honorary Doctor of Humane Letters. Derek Thompson '14, bottom right, was the commencement speaker.



More photos on p. 14-15.