

# Missouri Western

The magazine of Missouri Western State University | Winter 2018



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Martin Luther King III



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## WINTER 2018 VOLUME 16 NUMBER 1

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

## | In this issue |

### | ON THE COVER |

Martin Luther King III speaks on "Embracing the Ideals of Freedom, Justice and Equality" at the R. Dan Boulware Convocation on Critical Issues. Photo by Jessics Stewart/St. Joseph News-Press.

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A salute to alumni in the military, the University's ROTC program and its new director. You can also read about how Missouri Western supports its student veterans and military members.





## President's Perspective

Dear Friends,

Our fall semester began on a very good note with our 24th annual R. Dan Boulware Convocation on Critical Issues on Sept. 12. Our guest speaker, Martin Luther King III, exceeded expectations and delivered an outstanding address to a crowd of more than 3,000 in the Looney Complex. I was honored to meet him and spend some time with him.

While he was on campus, we held a special performance of our live, multimedia show about Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. and Walter Cronkite, "King & Cronkite," for Mr. King. He was very moved by the show and wants to work with us to take the show on the road, especially since this year marks the 50th anniversary of his father's death. Read all about Mr. King's visit on p. 16.

Less than two weeks after Mr. King's visit, our official fall enrollment numbers were tallied, and we were pleased to see overall enrollment increased 3.2 percent to 5,562. But more exciting than that number was the size of our freshman class – from 854 last year to 992 this year – a 16.2 percent increase!

In addition to increased marketing and enrollment management efforts, one key factor that contributed to our enrollment increase was the addition of six new sports. The University started competing in men's and women's cross country this past fall, and will field men's and women's indoor and outdoor track and field teams this semester. Read about the cross country team's inaugural season on p. 9.

I'm extremely proud of the efforts of our staff, faculty, students and alumni and community to address the enrollment challenges we have faced for the past several years. But additionally, I am excited that more students are discovering our outstanding academic programs and the many things that make our campus special.

It's a great time to be a Griffon!

Sincerely,

*Robert A. Vartabedian*

Robert A. Vartabedian  
President  
Missouri Western State University

Martin Luther King III, center, with Dan and Dale Boulware and Drs. Laurel and Bob Vartabedian.



## New funding for St. Joseph entrepreneurs

St. Joseph's entrepreneurial resources continue to grow. In June, the St. Joseph Innovation Stockyard, along with Missouri Western's Center for Entrepreneurship, St. Joseph Chamber of Commerce and Buchanan County, announced plans to team up with Digital Sandbox KC and the Missouri Technology Corporation (MTC) to provide entrepreneurs in northwest Missouri funding to pursue their startup business plan.

In partnership with MTC, Digital Sandbox KC has been very successful helping develop early-stage, high-potential startups in Kansas City. Its growth into St. Joseph, partially funded by a \$50,000 matching grant from MTC, will utilize Digital Sandbox's proof-of-concept program to target early-stage entrepreneurs in St. Joseph.

"This is an opportunity to stretch the program further across Missouri to help drive even more Missouri-based early-stage entrepreneurs towards success," said Jeff Shackelford, Digital Sandbox KC's executive director.

Innovation Stockyard, located in the Bond Incubator on campus and directed by Ronan Molloy, will offer grant recipients space in its new co-working center, as well as cash grants to help startups in northwest Missouri.

Sandbox funding may cover up to \$15,000 in project expenses for contracting, legal support, equipment and other market validation, prototyping and beta testing needs.

In September, the first St. Joseph company began receiving Digital Sandbox KC support. Toss it Curbside, founded by Aaron Brennan and Pedro Fernandez, provides an app-based professional removal service for unwanted items. ■

## Campus Kudos

- **Enrollment up:** A total of 5,562 students enrolled as of the official census date Sept. 25, 2017, including a 16.2 percent growth in the number of new freshmen. The total includes 5,321 undergraduate students and 241 graduate students and represents an overall increase of 3.2 percent increase over the fall 2016 official enrollment. The number of new freshmen increased from 854 last year to 992 this year.

Additional marketing and enrollment management efforts, plus the addition of six new sports, contributed to the enrollment surge. Missouri Western added men's and women's cross country last fall, and men's and women's indoor and outdoor track and field this semester. Another area of growth was in dual credit enrollment, with about 18 percent more high school students taking class for credit at Missouri Western compared to last year.

In addition to attracting new students, Missouri Western continues to meet its goals for retaining current students.

- **Kayla White '17** graduated with a physical therapist assistant degree and earned the rare feat of a perfect score on her national licensure exam from the Federation of State Boards of Physical Therapy – 800/800.
- The student chapter of **The Wildlife Society** was recognized as the International Student Chapter of the Year for 2017, the third time Missouri Western has been chosen and the highest honor that can be given to a student chapter. It is the only chapter in Missouri to ever be selected for the honor.

Each year, the students volunteer thousands of hours with Loess Bluffs National Wildlife Refuge, Swan Lake National Wildlife



The Wildlife Society student chapter

Refuge, Mingo National Wildlife Refuge, the Missouri Department of Conservation and the Share the Harvest program, which supplies venison to families in need. **Dr. Cary Chevalier** is the group's advisor.

- **Brittany Losensky '17** was the winner of the 2107 Trails West!® poster competition. The Allied Arts Council of St. Joseph sponsored the regional contest and poster submissions were open to the public. Losensky was part of the Graphic Design IV class that submitted over 30 entries.
- Students in the fall Journalism Broadcast Lab debuted the first student-produced sports show at Missouri Western in September 2017: Griffon Update Sports. **Bailey Ketcham**, a convergent journalism major, served as the producer/host; **Amaree Martin**, a communication major, served as producer/director; and **Gannon Cornley**, journalism major, hosted with Ketcham.

Griffon Update Sports ran bi-weekly throughout the semester, highlighting all Missouri Western sports and featuring games, players and coaches.

Students also continued Griffon Update, which featured people, places and events on campus and in the region. **Dr. Robert G. Nulph** is faculty advisor for Griffon Update and Griffon Update Sports.

- The **Chamber Singers**, directed by **Dr. Elise Hepworth**, were selected to perform this month at the Missouri Music Educators Conference and In-service at Tan-Tar-A Resort in Osage Beach, Missouri. This is the highest honor a choir can receive from the state. It is the Chamber Singers' first appearance in a decade.
- **Dr. Gary Clapp**, associate professor of chemistry, is helping to coordinate a \$2 million 21st Century Learning Communities five-year grant to provide laboratory experiences for five rural school districts in Missouri. ■



Chamber Singers



## New master's degrees at Missouri Western



A reception was held at the beginning of the fall semester to kick off the University's new MBA program. Faculty members from the Craig School of Business, members of the first class and business leaders who wrote letters of support for the program are pictured. Fifty students were admitted into the inaugural class.

Two new master's degrees began in fall 2017: a Master of Applied Science in Assessment with a K-12 Cross-Categorical Special Education option, and an MBA.

The MBA, offered through the Craig School of Business, has four concentration options: general business, enterprise resource planning, forensic accounting, and animal and life sciences. Dr. Logan Jones is the program coordinator. He noted that beginning in fall 2018, the degree will also be offered totally online.

The new degree in the Department of Education replaces the option in Autism Spectrum Disorders (ASD), which is being phased out. Successful completion of the MAS in Assessment degree will prepare graduates to complete the Missouri Content Assessment (MoCA) and qualify for K-12 Mild/Moderate, Cross-Categorical Special Education licensure from the Missouri Department of Elementary and Secondary Education. It is offered entirely online.

"The need for effective educators who know how to teach students with mild or moderate disabilities becomes more critical every year," said Dr. Dan

Shepherd, chair of Missouri Western's Department of Education. "This new option will help address that shortage because it is specifically designed to prepare graduates for state licensure."

Dr. Susan M. Bashinski, associate professor of special education and director of graduate programs in education, said the program includes a significant amount of practical, hands-on experience with a strong foundation in current research and practice. She

said discounted tuition is available to cohort groups who enroll.

"We are always looking for ways to meet the needs of our region's students and employers, and these programs are good examples of adjusting our curriculum to help fill a significant need for businesses and school districts in our region," said Dr. Ben Caldwell, dean of the Graduate School.

For additional information, visit [missouriwestern.edu/graduate](http://missouriwestern.edu/graduate). ■

### Piano Workshop

Dr. Nathanael May, associate professor of music – piano, works with participants at Missouri Western's free Hands On 4 St. Joe piano workshop. Dr. May and his piano students and area music teachers introduced 30 third-graders from 16 area schools to the basics of piano playing. He has been holding the workshops since 2011.



## Class assists Pony Express Museum

Most people can relate to having boxes and boxes of photographs and knowing that the task of labeling and organizing can be daunting. But when the Pony Express Museum in St. Joseph wanted help organizing thousands of slides, Dr. Kaye Adkins' technical documentation class stepped in.

Dr. Adkins, professor of English, said she likes to have a real client for this course, and a prior class had helped with manuals at a museum in Colorado. Dr. Adkins reached out to Cindy Daffron, director of the Pony Express Museum, to see if they needed any help with manual writing, but Daffron suggested the slide organizing project instead. Technical documentation involves information design and helping people find what they are looking for, so the project fit the class, Dr. Adkins said.

The slides were from a 1960s trip along the Pony Express route made by Don Reynolds, who worked for the St. Joseph Museum from 1955 to 1983.

Dr. Adkins's class had nine undergraduate students and three graduate students, so the class was split into three teams with a graduate student at the head of each team.

One team created a filing system to identify the slides by the carousel and slot where they resided ("I had tons of slide carousels all over my office"), one team scanned the slides, and one team researched scanners and photo editing software for the project so the museum could complete the project after the semester ended. That team also wrote up a report, kept records of student hours and wrote manuals about the project for museum volunteers.

"The idea was to get the system set up and started, so volunteers at the museum could continue the work," Dr. Adkins explained. She said her class scanned and catalogued about 450 of the slides during the semester.

Some of the students in the documentation class were also in

a multimedia class, so they helped with a Pony Express rider exhibit at the museum at the same time. The museum had stories of four Pony Express riders, and Missouri Western students recorded the actors, edited

the recordings and added sound effects. Those audios are part of an exhibit now.

"This turned out to be a great project," Dr. Adkins said. "This is what we do – try to get students involved in projects for real clients." ■

## More stadium improvements underway

A new pavilion on the west end of Craig Field at Spratt Memorial Stadium will be built and donated by Steve Craig, the benefactor for whom Craig Field and the Craig School of Business are named. Work began this past fall.

"The pavilion will provide the finishing piece to the recent improvements to Spratt Stadium, adding to the aesthetics of the stadium, providing symmetry to create a bowl effect and providing a unique game-day experience," Craig said.

The pavilion will be built into the hillside that housed the original stadium scoreboard before the new 2,500 square-foot video scoreboard was installed on the east end of the field last year (also made possible by

Craig). Among other features, the area will include an 80-foot tall flagpole, a barbecue area, two covered pavilions, and a large gathering area for groups and organizations.

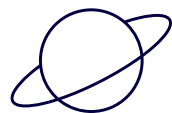
Craig will lease the construction site from Missouri Western for up to one year. He will hire a contractor and pay all of the costs of construction. When construction is finished, Craig will donate all of the improvements back to the university through the Missouri Western Foundation.

The lease also gives Craig the right to name the pavilion for the person of his choice, subject to approval by the Board of Governors. It is Craig's intention to identify a past or present resident of St. Joseph to honor with the pavilion's name. ■

The new stadium pavilion conceptual drawing







# Golden Griffon scholarships reward high achievers

Missouri Western's Golden Griffon scholarships reward high-achieving students and cover a good portion of their college tuition. The renewable scholarship, established by former president Dr. James Scanlon, is for incoming freshmen who meet specific academic requirements and are involved in extracurricular activities.

Two current recipients of the Golden Griffon are Joseph and Annaka Kellogg, from St. Joseph.

Joseph, a junior double major in economics and political science, said he looked at a few colleges, but Missouri Western was the only place he applied.

"This was where I needed to be, it was a nice fit," he said. "Professors are extremely qualified and you're set up to succeed."

Annaka is one of 14 Golden Griffon recipients for the 2017-18 academic year. The freshman business major enrolled at Missouri Western with 27 college credits, thanks to the University's dual credit program.

Annaka said she wanted to stay in the state for college, and once she decided on business and saw the

Craig School of Business, Missouri Western was an easy choice. She admits she's interested in the CSB's unique franchise program where alumni have the chance to earn a franchise opportunity.

She also likes the size of Missouri Western, because she says she can get involved in a lot of different organizations, including theatre.

"The small class sizes can't be overstated," said Joseph, who is thinking about going to law school after he graduates. "You're able to build personal relationships with professors."

One of the requirements of the Golden Griffon scholarship is that recipients must be in the Honors program, and both Annaka and Joseph like being a part of it.

"Honors is great. It gives you a more personal experience, and you're meeting people like you," Joseph said. "You build a support system."

"I like the higher level discussions and broadening my horizons," Annaka added.

Dr. Teddi Dekka, professor of psychology and director of the Honors

program and the Golden Griffon Scholarship, said she likes that the scholarship is based on merit only, rather than including a financial need component, so that high-achieving students can be rewarded for their academic success. She noted that an applicant's leadership experience and involvement as a high school student is also important.

"We want them to be involved on our campus and be leaders," she said. For a recipient's first two years, she

## Golden Griffon Criteria

- 3.5 GPA on a 4.0 scale OR top 10% of high school class
- Composite ACT score of 27
- Seven-semester high school transcript
- Evidence of involvement in extracurricular activities and community service
- Submit an essay according to prompt

High school students may apply online at [missouriwestern.edu/finaid](http://missouriwestern.edu/finaid)

Deadline is Feb. 1.



likes to see them joining clubs and organizations, and by their junior year, she wants them taking on leadership positions in those groups.

Joseph is right in line with Dr. Dekka's expectations. He joined Phi Delta Theta Fraternity and has participated in theatre. In 2016, he was appointed by Gov. Jay Nixon as student governor on Missouri Western's Board of Governors.

Annaka is currently involved in the Student Government Association and Alpha Sigma Alpha Sorority.

When the scholarship originated, recipients were required to live on campus, but that changed for incoming freshmen recipients in the 2015-16 academic year.

"We tried to make it so that the scholarship would be valuable to both those who wanted to live on campus and for those who did not," Dr. Dekka said.



Students in the Honors program pose for a photo at a reception for them at the start of the fall semester. Dr. Teddi Dekka, Honors program director, said there was a large increase in Honors participants for the 2017-18 academic year.

Recipients now have two options: They can accept \$5,000 per year and live off campus, or live on campus and receive \$5,000 plus the cost of a room on the Academic Achievement floor of Vaselakos Hall.

Since it changed, the scholarship has attracted not only more applicants, but more high-achieving applicants, Dr. Dekka said. ■

## Campus celebrates internationality



Adeeb Alsaawi, an international student from Saudi Arabia, writes students' names in Arabic at the Saudi National Day celebration on campus this fall. The day is celebrated every Sept. 23 to commemorate the establishment of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia in 1932.



Members of the campus and community gathered for the annual Chinese Mid-Autumn Festival. The festival is coordinated by the exchange faculty member from Xidian University every year.

Joseph and Annaka Kellogg, Golden Griffon Scholarship recipients.





# Athletics Hall of Fame Class of 2017

Seven individuals and one team were inducted into the Missouri Western Athletics Hall of Fame in October 2017 at the Rogers Pharmacy Hall of Fame weekend. Members were recognized and presented with Hall of Fame rings at halftime of the football game. The 2017 induction class includes:

The **1981-82 men's basketball team** went 25-7 under Hall of Fame Head Coach Gary Filbert, who was assisted by Skip Shear and Bob Burchard. The Griffons won the CSIC with an 11-3 conference record and went on to win the NAIA District 16 championship. That season, the team went 16-1 at home as the first Griffon team to call the current arena home. The team featured three NAIA All-District selections, and Filbert was named NAIA District 16 Coach of the Year.

**Chris Ball '87**, football player from 1982-85, was an All-American defensive back for the Griffons in 1985. In his All-American season, Ball recorded 95 total tackles with two sacks, seven tackles for loss, three interceptions and five pass break ups. He recorded 12 career interceptions and was named All-CSIC three times in his Griffon career. Since graduating from Missouri Western, Ball has become a highly regarded defensive coach and has been the defensive coordinator at the University of Memphis since 2016. Ball has also had coaching stops at Arizona State, Washington State, Pittsburgh, Alabama and Missouri Western.

**Clint Gilliland**, baseball player from 2003-06, posted a career record of 25-19 with a 3.79 ERA in four seasons as a pitcher. He was named All-MIAA three times, including first-team honors in 2005. Gilliland was also named second team CoSIDA All-District following the 2005 season. He posted nine-win seasons in 2004 and 2005 and never appeared in fewer than 13 games. Gilliland was named to the MIAA Academic Honor Roll four times. He has been a Missouri State Highway Patrol trooper since 2007.

**Gijon Robinson**, football player from 2003-06, was a three-time All-MIAA selection as a tight end for the Griffons, also earning honorable mention All-American honors in 2005. Robinson was a four-year starter, totaling 83 receptions for 1,057 yards and seven touchdowns. He was named first team All-MIAA in 2005 after recording 28 catches for 428 yards. Robinson was signed as an undrafted free agent by the Indianapolis Colts in 2007 and spent six seasons in the NFL, playing in Super Bowl XLIV for the Colts.

**Lindsay (Palaia) Seyller '04**, volleyball player from 1999-2002, was one of the most decorated volleyball athletes in Missouri Western history. Seyller was named MIAA Most Valuable Player in 2002. She was a first team All-MIAA selection in both 2000 and 2002 and was named first-team AVCA and Daktronics All-South Central region in 2002. Seyller led the Griffons with 379 kills in 2002, and her 3.79 kills per set average that season ranks first all-time at Missouri Western. Her 1,426 blocks are the most in Griffon history, and she ranks fifth all-time with 1,256.5 career points.

At the time of her retirement, **Patsy Smith '95**, administrator in Athletics from 1998-2014, was serving as senior associate director of athletics and senior woman administrator, a role she had held since 2012. Smith continued to serve part-time as athletic business manager until March of 2017 before returning as interim director of athletics in July of 2017. She began her career at Missouri Western in the fall of 1990 as a tennis student athlete and graduated cum laude with a Bachelor of Science in Business Administration

**Nick Jenkins**, men's basketball player from 1997-99, was twice named first-team All-MIAA. Following the 1998-99 season, he was named first-team All-South Region and honorable mention All-American. Jenkins averaged 15.5 points to go with 3.4 assists and 2.4 steals per game in his senior season. He was part of two MIAA regular-season championships and one MIAA tournament championship while helping the team advance to the NCAA regional both seasons.



From left to right: Clint Gilliland, Nick Jenkins, Patsy Smith, Lindsay (Palaia) Seyller, Lamont Turner and Gijon Robinson.

in Accounting in 1995. In 1994, Smith became the head women's tennis coach and led the team to its first-ever NCAA Tournament in 1998. That same year, she became the first athletics business manager at Missouri Western. She served in the roles of compliance and academics, director of finance, assistant athletics director and finally, senior associate director of athletics and senior woman administrator.

**Lamont Turner**, men's basketball player from 2000-02, was a leader on one of the best men's basketball teams in Missouri Western history.

He was named MIAA Most Valuable Player for the 2001-02 season after leading the MIAA in scoring with a 21.6 point-per-game average. He also led that Griffon team with 7.5 rebounds per game. That season the Griffons claimed the MIAA regular-season championship and played in the NCAA South Central Regional. Turner is one of four Griffons all-time to score 1,000 points in a two-year career, totaling 1,138 in his two seasons.

*Note: Turner was elected as part of the 2013 induction class, but was unable to attend ceremonies in prior years. ■*

## Griffon Football

Football's first season under Head Coach Matt Williamson '96 ended with a 4-7 record.

Eleven Griffons received a total of 12 All-MIAA honors, including Cody Lindsay, who was named first-team linebacker. The three-time honorable mention All-MIAA selection led all MIAA linebackers with 17.5 tackles for loss and 6.5 sacks. Lindsay, a senior, led Missouri Western with a career-high 97 total tackles while also returning his lone interception for a touchdown, breaking up four passes, recording seven quarterback hurries and two fumble recoveries.

Hayden Eatinger, Max Oeser, Tyler Basch, Darrian Bass and Jonathan Owens were named to the second-team All-MIAA. Oeser was also named first-team CoSIDA Academic All-District for the second year in a row. ■

## Cross country debuts

The inaugural Griffon men's and women's cross country season began with the women taking first place and men taking third in their first-ever competition, the Bearcat Open in Maryville, Missouri. The women claimed the team championship by 34 points with six of the top-nine individual finishers, including champion Kaitlyn Shoemaker and second-place finisher Claire Reedy. The men placed two individuals in the top eight, including Noah Rasmussen in fourth.

The teams competed in six meets throughout the fall, including the MIAA championships and the NCAA Central Region Cross Country Championships at the Kearney Country Club.

The women saved its best for the most important event of its inaugural season. Every scoring Griffon posted a personal record and the team posted its best time of the season at the regional championship Nov. 4. The team finished 14th with Kaitlyn Shoemaker finishing 13th individually. Missouri Western women finished sixth among MIAA schools in the regional event.

The men's team finished in 24th place in their first-ever 10k race. Alex Bautista led the men.

The teams are headed by first-year coach Marc Bierbaum. There were 15 members of the women's team from six states and 14 from six states on the men's. ■





# Historic seasons: volleyball and soccer

## Volleyball dusts off the record books

What began as a pretty ordinary season became anything but, as Griffon volleyball won its first-ever regular-season MIAA championship and advanced to the NCAA Central Region semifinals. After beginning the season 7-8, the Griffons won 15 of 16 matches. On senior night Nov. 11, the Griffons ran their winning streak to 11 by upsetting University of Nebraska-Kearney to claim a share of the MIAA regular-season championship.

The winning streak continued into the postseason, where the team advanced to the MIAA Championship final by beating University of Central Oklahoma Nov. 17. That win was Head Coach Marian Carbin's 100th career win. It was the team's 24th win of the season, which was the most in Carbin's career and the most for the program since 1997.

The team lost in the championship game to Nebraska-Kearney, ending a 13-match winning streak that was the longest for volleyball since 1987. The team was awarded the No. 6 seed in the NCAA Division II Central Region Championships, its first appearance in the NCAA tournament since 2000.



The 2017 record-breaking volleyball team. Head Coach Marian Carbin '07, far left, was named MIAA Coach of the Year.

Once there, the Griffons got revenge, ending Nebraska-Kearney's season in the quarterfinals before falling to defending national champion and eventual regional champion, Concordia-St. Paul, in four sets. The Griffons ended the season 16-2 in the MIAA, with the 16 wins matching the most in program history.

Carbin '07 was named MIAA Coach of the Year and middle blocker Ali Tauchen was named MIAA Freshman of the Year. Stephanie Doak, who led the team with 478 kills, was named first-team All-MIAA along with Lauren Murphy and Shellby Taylor.

Doak was named All-MIAA for the second straight year. She had double-digit kills in 28 games this season and was third in the MIAA for kills per set and kills.

Murphy led the MIAA with 1,459 assists and 11.67 assists per set. She had three matches this season that rank in the top five in program history for assists in a match;

she is second for assists per set in a single season as well. Murphy was named MIAA Specialist of the Week three times in 2017.

Taylor picked up All-MIAA honors for the second time in her career. She had 357 kills, averaged 2.68 kills per set and had a .254 hitting percentage on the season. In 16 matches this season, Taylor had a hitting percentage of .300 or better.

Tauchen, Rachel Losch and Kayla Ruff were named second-team All-MIAA and Ruff was also named to the all-region tournament team. ■

### VOLLEYBALL 2017

**MIAA Coach of the Year**  
**MIAA Freshman of the Year**  
**MIAA Co-Champions**  
**1st NCAA Regional Win**  
**Most Wins Since 1997**



## Soccer's stellar season

Griffon women's soccer has been making history and steadily improving the last few years, but 2017 was a real breakout season. For the first time since soccer arrived on campus in 2005, the team was a contender for the conference title and advanced to post-season play. Overall, more than 30 team, individual and career records were broken in the 2017 season.

The women, who are coached by Chad Edwards, finished the season 17-5 and hosted its first post-season MIAA conference tournament game, where they were the no. 2 seed, the highest they have ever been ranked in the MIAA. They beat University

of Central Oklahoma at home and Washburn University in Warrensburg, but lost in the championship game to University of Central Missouri. Even with the loss, the Griffons were selected to play Southwestern Oklahoma State University in the first round of the NCAA Central Region Championship as the no. 3 seed in Mankato, Minnesota. They lost 1-0.

The 17 wins of the season beat out last year's record 11 wins, and the team's 51 goals this season are one goal short of doubling the previous program record. The defense posted a program-record 13 shutouts in 2017 and allowed fewer goals per game than any previous

Missouri Western soccer team.

The individual accolades have come as well, as 10 Griffons earned All-MIAA honors. Three were named first team: Cassidy Menke, Bridget Blessie and Madeline Cowell. Sarah Lyle, Sarah Blakley and Sydney Cluck were named to the All-MIAA second team. It was Menke's second career first-team All-MIAA honor after leading the MIAA with 15

goals and 33 points. Cowell had seven assists and Blessie finished second in the MIAA with five game-winning goals.

Menke was also named CoSIDA Academic All-District®, and Menke, Cowell and Blessie were all named



Top right - Sydney Cluck, held by Sarah Blakley, rings the victory bell in the stadium's video scoreboard. The 2017 team got a lot of practice ringing the bell this season. Bottom left, Cassidy Menke earned several honors throughout the 2017 soccer season.



second-team Division II Conference Commissioner's Association All-Central Region. Cowell was named first-team All-Central Region by the United Soccer Coaches, and Blessie and Menke picked up second-team honors. ■

### SOCCER 2017

**30+ Team/Individual Records**  
**First Postseason Win (x2)**  
**First Time Hosting an MIAA Tournament Game**  
**Top 25 Ranking During the Season**  
**1st National Tournament Appearance**



# Missouri Western State University decade in review

*A look back at the past 10 years reveals a lot to be proud of at Missouri Western, and we wanted to share that with our readers.*

## 2008-2017

- 2008** Dr. Robert Vartabedian becomes president
- 2008** Campus beautification is launched, including new signage, pond fountains, trees and outdoor sculptures.
- 2009** A unique program begins that gives students the opportunity to earn a franchise business
- 2010** Campus becomes the summer home of the Kansas City Chiefs Training Camp
- 2010** Named All-Steinway School
- 2011** Missouri Western Arts Society founded
- 2011** Craig School of Business receives AACSB prestigious accreditation
- 2011** The musical, “Phantom,” sells out all four performances. The 2011-12 theatre season draws in more than 7,700 attendees.



- 2013** Walter Cronkite Memorial opens and eventually includes three live, multimedia shows.
- 2014** The Center for Entrepreneurship is founded
- 2014** Comprehensive Master Plan work begins
- 2014** MWSU receives largest gift in its history – \$10 million anonymous pledge

- 2014** Spring Commencement ceremony returns to Spratt Memorial Stadium
- 2015** Centennial Celebration and Centennial Capital Campaign begins

- 2015** New sculpture unveiled on campus, “The Next 100 Years ...”

- 2016** School of Nursing and Health Professions founded

- 2017** The freshman class in fall 2017 was up 16.3 percent from fall 2016



- 2012** Signed exchange agreement with Xidan University
- 2012** Western Playhouse makes its debut.
- 2012** Greek living quarters open on campus
- 2013** School of Fine Arts founded

## New Construction and Renovations Since 2008

New construction: Gold      Renovations: Red



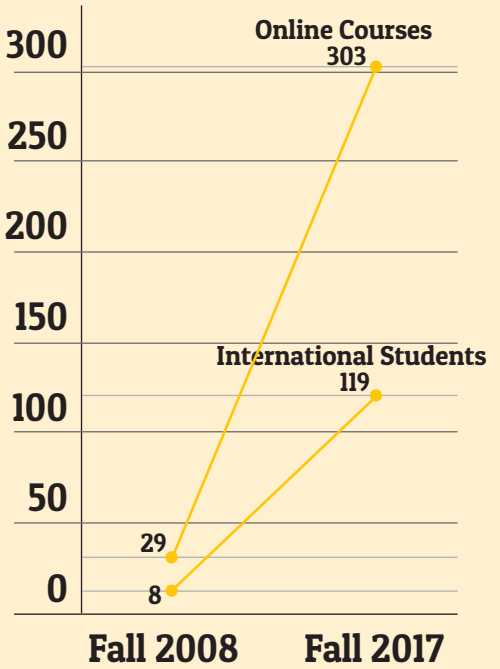
New construction and renovations in the past decade include a new math and sciences building, a new residence hall, a completely renovated stadium with one of the largest video scoreboards in NCAA Division II and a new spring sports complex that brought the baseball

team’s home field on campus for the first time in history.

In 2016, with the indoor pool facing major repairs, there was a lot of talk of closing it and filling it in. But thanks to partnerships with the City of St. Joseph, Buchanan County and the St. Joseph

School District, the pool was renovated and named for the late Sen. Thomas Eagleton.

Currently, the Centennial Capital Campaign’s facilities goal is focusing on raising funds for Potter Hall additions and renovations. ■





Athletics Successes  
2008-2017

- 2009** Softball has 32-game winning streak, sets a school and conference record, and ends the season 47-12
- 2011** Football hosts a playoff game for the first time
- 2012** Football advances to quarterfinals in the national championship, breaking more than 40 individual and team records
- 2013** Baseball records a 40-12 season and softball goes 38-16
- 2015** For the second straight year, volleyball exceeds 20 wins in a season, a mark they hadn't reached since 2000.
- 2016** Women's basketball wins the regular-season MIAA Championship and advances to the NCAA tournament. The team sets new program records and finishes 27-4
- 2016** Women's golf qualifies for the Division II National Championships
- 2016** Softball earns both the MIAA regular season and tournament championships, finishing the season 45-13
- 2017** Six new sports are added: men's and women's cross country, men's and women's indoor and outdoor track
- 2017** Women's soccer (17-5) and volleyball (25-11) teams both advance to postseason. The volleyball team is MIAA co-champion and earns MIAA Coach of the Year and MIAA Freshman of the Year. ■



| Alumni Profile |

Alumna at the helm of Eureka College

Dr. Jamel Santa Cruze Wright '00 was named the 27th president of Eureka College in July 2017. She had been serving as interim president since July 1, 2016.

Dr. Wright, a native of St. Louis, graduated from Missouri Western with a Bachelor of Science in Communication Studies, and within four years, earned her master's and doctorate degrees from the University of Kansas. She was Missouri Western's Commencement speaker at its Spring 2004 ceremony.

In an article in the Spring 2005 issue of the Missouri Western Magazine, Dr. Wright said that, although she didn't appreciate it at the time, Missouri Western prepared her well for her academic and professional future.

"The professors really crafted the experience for us. Looking back now, the rigor in that program is definitely needed and appreciated," she said. "It wasn't until I graduated that I realized the value of being a graduate of an institution like Missouri Western."

Dr. Wright had several years of experience in higher education as an administrator and full-time faculty member when she joined Eureka in 2014 as the college's first chief diversity officer. She was also hired as vice president for strategic and diversity initiatives.

In her interim president role, Eureka College saw growth within its mission of furthering excellence and opportunities in learning, service and leadership, according to a press release from Eureka College. Dr. Wright introduced The Uniquely Eureka Advantage, a program offering innovative commitments to incoming students including graduation in four years, a four-year tuition freeze, an experiential learning award to all new students and opportunities to study abroad. Dr. Wright collaborated with the faculty to design a new curriculum to better prepare students for rewarding careers and meaningful lives.



Dr. Jamel Santa Cruze Wright '00

Additionally, she presided over one of the most successful accreditation processes in the history of the college. Under Dr. Wright's leadership, the college also implemented improvements to academic and athletic facilities.

Eureka College, chartered in 1855 and founded by abolitionists, was the first in Illinois and the third in the nation to admit men and women on an equal basis and is the smallest college to graduate a future President of the United States (Ronald Reagan). ■

Higher ed presidents  
from Missouri Western

According to our records, Dr. Jamel Santa Cruze Wright '00 is the third higher education president to claim Missouri Western as their alma mater. When Dr. Wright became president of Eureka College last summer, she joined Dr. Bernie Patterson '73 who has served as president of University of Wisconsin-Stevens Point since 2010; and Richard Durst '71, who was president of Baldwin Wallace University in Berea, Ohio 2006-12. ■

| Alumni mentor |

Rick Moeckel '00, vice president, Institutional Business Unit Leader for Clayco, is serving as a mentor for freshman Darius Wherry, Florissant, Missouri, as part of the Clayco Career Development Initiative. In the initiative, Clayco partners with local high schools in disadvantaged areas to educate the students on the opportunities in the design and construction industry. Wherry also received a scholarship from Clayco.





# Keeping the dream alive

Martin Luther King III was the featured speaker at the 24th annual R. Dan Boulware Convocation on Critical Issues in September. Along with his presentation, he attended a sponsor reception and a breakfast with 25 student leaders. He also spoke at a lunch in the Fulkerson Center. King's presentation in the Looney Complex, "Embracing the Ideals of Freedom, Justice and Equality," drew two standing ovations from the audience of over 3,000.

"Those were the core principles of my father's leadership," he told those attending. "My parents held these ideals in high esteem, and my father's life was focused on freedom, justice and equality."

He said after his father died, his mother was often asked to attend or

speak at events. "My mom would ask, 'how does that serve the cause?' And the cause was always freedom, justice and equality. That question is still worth asking today.

If you hold fast to these ideals, you're going to be okay."

**"I encourage you to study the history of nonviolence. Make it a cornerstone of your life. Make a firm unshakeable commitment to nonviolence."**

— Martin Luther King III

At the breakfast prior to his presentation, King opened the floor for questions from the students, and one asked him how he controlled his anger.

"A lot of times I'm disappointed," he said, "but I try not to get angry." In quoting his father and his message of nonviolence, he noted that "violence can't stamp out violence."

After the event in the arena, King participated in a question-and-answer session at the lunch for an audience of more than 300.



Top, Martin Luther King III poses with the Griffon men's basketball team; bottom, King greets high school students who attended his presentation.

"Mr. King had a very important message for our students, employees, area high school students and community members," said Dr. Robert Vartabedian, Missouri Western's president. "It is hard to believe that in 2018, his father will have been gone for 50 years, yet his message is still as relevant today as it was then." ■

**"Take the long view. You get involved in the great work of social reform for your kids, grandkids and generations not born. My parents knew that the things they were working for, they would not see in their life."**

— Martin Luther King III

## Martin Luther King III views "King & Cronkite" performance

Martin Luther King III's visit to campus for the R. Dan Boulware

**"The sacrifices we make today are the building blocks of achieving Martin Luther King, Jr.'s dream."**

— Martin Luther King III

Cronkite," Missouri Western's live, multimedia show.

Convocation on Critical Issues included a sponsor reception on Monday evening, Sept. 11. The reception ended with a special performance of "King &

Based on Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.'s 1963 "I Have a Dream" speech, "King & Cronkite" features the words of the civil rights leader and the reflections of Walter Cronkite on the civil rights movement. Through historical photographs, music, and live actors, "King & Cronkite" explores the intersecting journeys of those two who helped define the 20th century. Walter Coppage plays Dr. King and Jim Korinke plays Walter Cronkite.

"It was such an honor to be able to have Dr. King's son view the performance," said Jerry Pickman '85, vice president for University

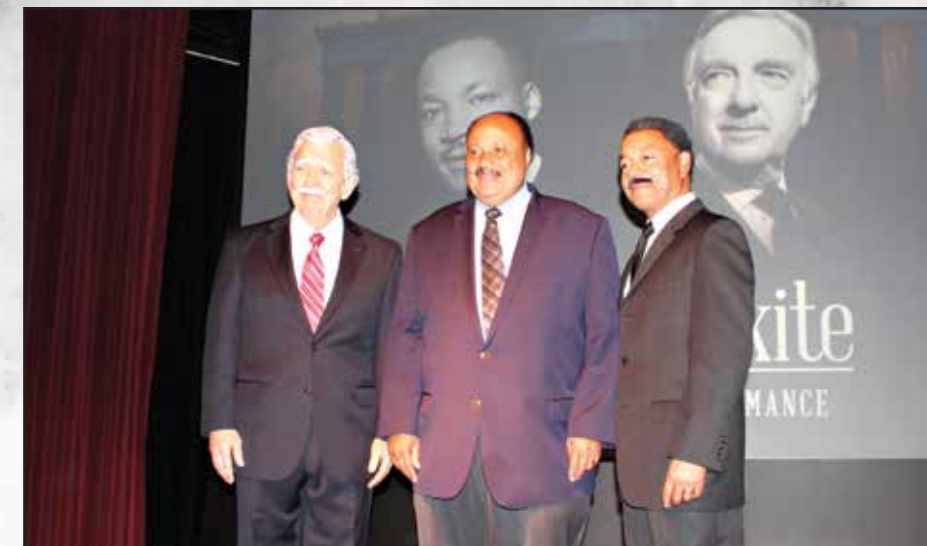
Advancement and executive director of the Missouri Western Foundation. "To know he was in the audience for the performance made it very moving."

Dr. Robert Vartabedian, Missouri Western's president, said that King, after seeing the show, is interested in using it as part of his tour of public schools in 2018, which marks the 50th anniversary of his father's assassination.

**"My mom and dad taught us that hate is too big of a burden to bear. We couldn't emotionally engage in the hate or we would be destroyed. I chose the pathway of love because that was more fulfilling."**

— Martin Luther King III

Plans are also underway to perform the Walter Cronkite Memorial's first live, multimedia performance, "Cronkite," as part of a ceremony in Kansas City, Missouri to name a street in honor of Walter Cronkite. Officials in Topeka, Kansas are working with University staff for a performance there, as well. ■



Jim Korinke, Martin Luther King III and Walter Coppage visit following the performance of "King & Cronkite" in the Kemper Recital Hall. Korinke plays the part of Walter Cronkite and Coppage plays Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. "King & Cronkite" was shown as part of Martin Luther King III's visit to campus for the R. Dan Boulware Convocation on Critical Issues in September 2017.

**"The principles that molded my life that my mom and dad taught me were to love myself, love family, love community and love God. That worked for me. That's how my wife and I are raising our daughter."**

— Martin Luther King III, speaking at Missouri Western Sept. 12, 2017



# Serving our country with honor



Missouri Western students and alumni at Camp Arifjan, Kuwait: CPL Corey Harrison, SPC Tyrese Husky, SPC Cierra Murphy, SSG Nicole Barr, SFC Daniel Moore '11/'16, 1LT Jesse Meek '13 and LTC Troyce Gill '92. Also stationed there and not pictured are SPC Michael Rose '16, SSG Danny Gabriel '01 (Law Enforcement Academy), MSG Paul Frey '96, SFC Brett Spitzer '16, CPT Walter Brown '12, and student Joshua Gillenwater.

## Missouri Western assists veterans

Several campuswide initiatives to serve veterans and active-duty military have resulted in a prestigious recognition, a course held on an air base, a new partnership and a more military-friendly University.

The efforts have been led by Dr. Gordon Mapley and Mary Marston in the Western Institute.

"There is a continuum across the country of how universities respond to the needs of active-duty military and veterans," Dr. Mapley said. "My goal is to move Missouri Western to the top end of that continuum and be as proactive and helpful as we can be in providing pathways and services that will help veterans and active-duty military earn collegiate degrees."

Toward that end, Missouri Western recently became a part of the General Education Mobile Program (GEM) with the Community College of the Air Force (CCAF). That partnership means members of the Air Force can

take general education courses online through Missouri Western to earn their Associate in Applied Science degree from the CCAF. At the same time, Dr. Mapley is working on allowing more courses from the CCAF to be used toward Missouri Western's Bachelor of Science in Technology degree.

Additionally, this past fall, the University offered a communication class on site to airmen at the 139th Airlift Wing at Rosecrans in St. Joseph, and a psychology class will be offered in the spring.

Missouri Western is also working with Fort Leavenworth on possible partnership programs, and is developing more online bachelor's degrees, which work well for military personnel.

Over the past year, Marston met with several offices across campus in an effort to streamline the University's services and processes for veterans and members of the military. She formed a Military Friendly Committee on campus and

developed a comprehensive website to centralize information about services and resources for active military and veteran students, [missouriwestern.edu/military](http://missouriwestern.edu/military).

She is also working with several community groups, including the Community Veterans Engagement, which serves Platte and Buchanan counties in Missouri and Leavenworth and Wyandotte counties in Kansas.

And Marston's work has paid off. In November 2017, Missouri Western was notified that it received a 2018 Military Friendly® School designation. According to the website, [militaryfriendly.com](http://militaryfriendly.com), "Military Friendly® is the standard that measures an organization's commitment, effort and success in creating sustainable and meaningful benefit for the military community."

"We're very proud of that designation," Marston said. "We want to be proactively military friendly." ■

## LTC Matthew Gragg '97: University connections

Lieutenant Colonel Matthew Gragg '97 says his most memorable experience as a student was the relationships he built, and a couple of those relationships brought him back to campus this past fall. He had been invited to campus by Head Football Coach Matt Williamson '96, his Griffon football teammate, but he also visited with Lieutenant Colonel Zac Kerns '98, director of Missouri Western's ROTC program, his former fellow cadet (see p. 21).

Back on campus for the Oct. 7 Military Appreciation Game against Lindenwood University, LTC Gragg spoke to the football team Friday evening, ran in to the stadium with them on Saturday ("That was a real honor") and flipped the coin to start the game.

"I told them that the position they are in now, even though they are being challenged, will force them to be better men and future leaders."

And, he says he couldn't resist telling the football players some funny stories about their coach since he and Williamson were college roommates.

Earlier on Friday, he spoke to several current ROTC cadets about his military

experiences, and that was a double homecoming of sorts; LTC Gragg had served as an instructor in Missouri Western's program from 2006 to 2008.

LTC Gragg graduated from Raymore-Peculiar High School in Peculiar, Missouri and came to Missouri Western on a four-year football scholarship, lettering all four years. He also earned an ROTC scholarship for his last three years of college.

Although football and ROTC kept him busy, he said he appreciated that the two programs collaborated with each other. For example, he said he was excused when the weekly ROTC lab made him late for football practice, and during football season, he was able to suspend the thrice-weekly ROTC physical training program.

"I have no doubt that my 20-plus-year career in the U.S. Army would not have been successful without the foundational leadership instilled in me at Missouri Western," LTC Gragg said. "The professors, coaches and military instructors challenged me on a daily basis to push beyond my academic and physical limits that ultimately prepared

me for the challenges of military service abroad and in combat."

LTC Gragg graduated with a Bachelor of Science Degree in Physical Education and was commissioned as a second lieutenant in the Military Police Corps in 1997. He has been deployed to Kosovo once and Bosnia twice, and served combat tours in Iraq (twice) and Afghanistan. Along with St. Joseph, his assignments have included Germany, Hawaii and Virginia. Since 2016, he has been the military police branch chief at Fort Knox, Kentucky.

He has completed Airborne, Jump Master, Air-Assault, Special Reaction Team Course, Hostage Negotiator Course, Non-Lethal Weapons Instructor Course, Combatives Level I and II, the MP Basic Officer Basic Course, the MP Officer Advanced Course, the Combined Arms Service Staff School, the Command and General Staff College, the Joint and Combined Warfighting School, and Senior Service College.

"I would summarize my military career as years of repetitive and tedious field training, staff work, and leadership challenges ... punctuated by a few hours of terrifying adrenaline pumping, I can't believe I'm seeing or doing this, that has all taken place (sometimes simultaneously) in some of the most beautiful and horrible places on Earth," LTC Gragg said. "I've had the opportunity to see extreme acts of bravery in places that face absolute evil and desolation as a routine way of life. I couldn't be more proud of the men and women I've served with or the friends and families that have supported them. These experiences have made me better appreciate all the good that we have in America, as well as making me feel a small bit of sadness for what we as a nation tend to think of as important sometimes." ■

LTC Matthew Gragg, right, briefs Major General Mark Inch, the U.S. Army Provost Marshal General in Bydgoszcz, Poland in June 2016.





# ROTC: Preparing leaders

Senior Dallas Thomas appreciates all the experiences that he has had with the ROTC program and knows one thing for sure: his resume rocks.

“When I think about my resume and compare it to other students who are not in ROTC, I know I have so much more experience,” he says.



Dallas Thomas

Especially when it comes to leadership, which is what ROTC is all about. Last summer alone, Thomas was selected for a diplomatic deployment to Argentina for a month, he attended advanced camp, a month-long training at Fort Knox, Kentucky where he served as a squad leader; and he spent a month shadowing an active-duty lieutenant at Fort Sill, Oklahoma.

In Argentina, he served with cadets from around the world, learning about Argentina's military and culture. He said the last time a similar diplomatic group had visited Argentina was in 1964.

About half his visit was spent in Buenos Aires at a military college (similar to West Point in the United States) and the rest was spent at a mountain warfare school in the Andes Mountains in the Patagonia region, where the group used mules to transport military equipment and learned about mountain survival.

“It was an amazing experience, and I made some phenomenal friends,” Thomas said. “The trip taught me a lot about who I am as a person.”

Thomas, a native of Gower, Missouri and a criminal justice major, explained that with each year in the ROTC program, students take on more and more leadership roles. As a senior, he oversees the physical training plans and teaches some of the weekly labs.

Haliey Cheeney, a sophomore in the ROTC program, said this year, she and a fellow cadet are responsible for creating the 6 a.m., three-times-a-week physical training plans.

When she graduated from high school, the Dawn, Missouri native considered signing on for active-duty military, but received a scholarship from her community to help pay for her freshman year at Missouri Western. Once on campus, her friend, who was a cadet, convinced her to sign up for ROTC classes, “even though I didn't know what I was getting into,” she said with a laugh. “But I love it.”

Cheeney, a health and exercise science major, received an ROTC



Haliey Cheeney

scholarship for her sophomore, junior and senior years, and is a member of the Missouri Army National Guard (as is Thomas).

She appreciates all the experiences she has had and knows she is building her confidence and leadership skills. Cheeney said she loves flying in the Chinook helicopters whenever they go to their field training exercises at Fort Leavenworth, Kansas or Fort Riley, Kansas.

Like Cheeney, Thomas says being able to develop his character and leadership skills through ROTC has been invaluable, and he appreciates the opportunity to work closely with the cadre (instructors and leadership).

“Missouri Western's by far the best place to do ROTC.” ■

## Zachary Kerns '98: Back home to lead

Lieutenant Colonel Zachary Kerns '98 was digging through some old photos and found one of himself when he was a cadet in Missouri Western's military science program in 1996. “I hung it on the wall by my office door to remind myself of where I was at their (current cadets) age and everything I've done since.”

LTC Kerns' wall and office door happen to be pretty close to the current cadets, because he returned to his alma mater last summer as the director of Missouri Western's ROTC program.

“I've always wanted to come back, it's always been my dream,” he said.

Enrolling at Missouri Western after graduating from Central High School in St. Joseph, LTC Kerns said he wanted to quit about halfway through the first semester until he discovered the ROTC program. “That gave me the goal I was looking for. It was a good fit.”

The military science program became his campus home, and he says he spent the majority of his college career with ROTC-related activities.

“Every opportunity they gave me, I jumped on.”



LTC Zachary Kerns '98

He graduated with a Bachelor of Science in Construction Engineering Technology and began serving in the Army. His career has spanned the globe and included a number of deployments, always with a mission of fighting the war on terrorism.

In addition to earning a Master of Arts in Interagency Studies from University of Kansas-Lawrence, his

military education has included Basic and Advanced Infantry Officer courses, Special Forces Qualification Course, Command and General Staff College, SOCOM Operational Design course, Joint Warfighters Course, Ranger school, Airborne Jumpmaster, Air Assault, and SERE (Survival, Evasion, Resistance, Escape). LTC Kerns is a member of the Green Berets.

“I was looking for adventure and I got that. I wanted to have lots of good stories to tell as an old man.”

LTC Kerns said the best part about the military is the people you work with, and the best part about being in charge of the ROTC program is spending time with the cadets and mentoring them. He is responsible for the Pony Express Battalion, which includes eight partner schools along with Missouri Western. There are approximately 75 cadets currently in the program.

“ROTC offers good quality hands-on leadership training, and there are so many different opportunities,” he said. “It's great to be back at Missouri Western where I got my start.”

And if he ever forgets, he just has to glance at the wall by his office door. ■

ROTC cadets board CH47 Chinook helicopters for weekend field training at Fort Leavenworth this past September. Training exercises included rifle marksmanship, orientation and a road march.





# Col. Grace Link '92: Proud to Serve

In June 2017, Col. Grace Link '92 was honored as the keynote speaker at the YWCA Women of Excellence Luncheon in St. Joseph. She told the audience of more than 1,000 how important her family and her Missouri Air National Guard colleagues are to her.

"It really takes a lot of people coming together to help you succeed," she said. "We succeed because of the great people who have helped us. I wouldn't be where I am without them."

Col. Link also talked about her proud service with the Air National Guard and her career over more than two decades. Two years ago, she was promoted to Director of Staff for the Air Guard at the Joint Force Headquarters-Missouri in Jefferson City.

Col. Link, who grew up in Chicago, was a member of the Illinois Air National Guard in Chicago for seven months when she and her husband, Scott, moved to St. Joseph and she began working full-time as an Inventory Management Specialist for the Air Guard in St. Joseph. Not long after moving, she enrolled at Missouri Western to major in electronics engineering technology.

"The one thing I really enjoyed about Missouri Western was that there was a lot more one-on-one with professors. They have time to take a vested interest in each student," Col. Link said.

In fact, she credits Dr. John Atkinson with leading her in the right direction with math classes. He told her to take calculus-based math classes, and she said she would not have gotten into graduate school without those classes. "It was really good advice."

In 1992, Col. Link graduated with a Bachelor of Science in Electronics



Col. Grace Link, at a ceremony in 2016, is pictured with her daughter and son, who is pinning on her new rank.

Engineering Technology and continued her education at Oklahoma State University where she earned a Master of Science in Civil Engineering. Over her military career, she has completed Squadron Officer School, Air Command and Staff College, Air War College, and Joint and Command Warfighting School at National Defense University in Virginia. She was promoted to Colonel in September 2016.

Because of her engineering background, her deployments have primarily focused on construction and humanitarian missions, such as reconstructing orphanages in Europe, ensuring that there was safe water in Panama and completing construction projects in the United States for the Wounded Warrior project. She loves helping out in communities while

representing her country, including responding to emergencies in the state.

"The great thing about being in construction is that you leave something behind, you can see the results of your work," she said.

Prior to her current position in Jefferson City, she was the Deputy Mission Support Group Commander for the 139th Airlift Wing in St. Joseph.

Her son and daughter are both members of the Guard, and her son is currently a student at Missouri Western. Her husband retired from the Guard.

"Being a member of the Missouri National Guard has been the most rewarding career experience I could have ever imagined," Col. Link said. "The Missouri National Guard paid for my education, afforded me the opportunity to travel all over the world, and most of all has been the greatest family anybody could have ever asked for! People often ask why I work so hard. It's the least I can do to give back!"

## Students receive Gold Star Family Scholarship

The Missouri Western Foundation recently funded Gold Star Family scholarships for two students whose father, SFC Gary Collins, died in Iraq in 2003. The scholarships, which cover both tuition and fees, were presented to Taylor and Landry Collins at the Oct. 30 Kansas City Chiefs football game at Arrowhead Stadium in Kansas City, Missouri.

Taylor, a senior physical education/health and exercise science major, and

Landry, a sophomore nursing major, are from St. Joseph. Their mother, Kassie, said her husband was a natural-born soldier who loved his career in the U.S. Army. She added that she is very proud of her daughters and all they have accomplished.

According to its website, Heroes United serves Gold Star Families, the surviving family members of Americans who were killed in action and those who died in the line of duty. ■

## New scholarship benefits veterans

Brad Durham, owner of B-FIT CrossFit and Sports Performance, recently established the B-FIT CrossFit Veterans Scholarship with a gift to the Missouri Western Foundation.

Recipients must be full-time students with a minimum cumulative GPA of 2.5, and must have served in the U.S. military.

B-FIT CrossFit, in St. Joseph, offers programs for children and adults to improve range of motion and core strength. ■

Left, Mary Marston from the Western Institute coordinated a "Fill-up-a-Truck" campaign at the Nov. 11 football game. Fans were asked to bring items that will be sent to deployed soldiers. Below, Dr. Robert Vartabedian, Missouri Western's president, fourth from right; Jerry Pickman '85, vice president for University Advancement and executive director of the MWSU Foundation, third from right; on the field at Arrowhead Stadium to award Gold Star Family scholarships to students Taylor and Landry Collins.





## CENTENNIAL CAPITAL



Student Chloe Oyler discusses her sculpture with Carol Roever at the annual meeting of the Missouri Western Arts Society this past fall. Members had the opportunity to tour Potter Hall and view student projects.

## Potter Hall planning takes shape

Missouri Western personnel have been working with the architectural firm of Patterhn Ives to determine the greatest needs and the most efficient design for Potter Hall additions and renovations. Keep an eye out for an announcement after the first of the year!

"The plans are very exciting," said Kim Weddle '00, director of development. "I know the faculty and students in the School of Fine Arts will be very pleased."

She noted that the additions and renovations are dependent on gifts received for the project as part of the Centennial Capital Campaign. ■

## Professor emeritus joins Clock Tower Society

Barry Greenwald estimates he taught around 10,000 students in his more than 25-year career as an accounting professor at Missouri Western. His love for those students led him recently to include the University in his estate planning.

"I wanted to do something for the students more than anything," he said. "It's really showing appreciation for what the students did for me."

Barry, who was named professor emeritus of business when he retired in 2000, established the Barry Greenwald Endowed Textbook Scholarship to help future students pay for textbooks. He remembers how expensive textbooks were for students when he was teaching and thought that would be a great way to help students. Preference will be given to business majors.

After graduating from the University of Denver and becoming a CPA, he worked for a time in Denver. He then taught at Southeast Missouri State University in Cape Girardeau for four years before joining the Missouri Western family in 1974.

Barry said when he was teaching, it became a habit to sit in the hallway prior to his class time, and invariably, students from his class would approach him with questions or to request explanation of a lesson.

"I really enjoyed working with students and explaining the reasons why we did things; it was fun to see them learn." He is very proud of the success of his students, as well.

Barry chose to make Missouri Western part of his estate because, when he passes away, he wants to be

remembered as giving something to the University.

"I can't call Missouri Western my alma mater, but it was mine for 27 years," Barry said. "It's where my heart is." ■



**The Missouri Western State University Foundation Annual Report for fiscal year 2017 is now online!**

Check it out at [missouriwestern.edu/foundation/about/financials](http://missouriwestern.edu/foundation/about/financials).

## CAMPAIGN NEWS

## Donors establish four scholarships

Thanks to generous Missouri Western Foundation donors, four new scholarships have recently been established – the Mary Byrne Stewart Graduate Nursing Scholarship, the SJC Marketing Scholarship, the Loah Stallard Graduate Nursing Scholarship and the B-FIT CrossFit Veterans Scholarship.

The **Mary Byrne Stewart Graduate Nursing Scholarship** is for students enrolled in one of Missouri Western's two master's programs in nursing. It was established by her three daughters, Dr. Imogene Rigdon, Harriet Lunsford and Mary Jane Tabor.

"Nursing is a vibrant profession and a critical component of effective and efficient health care," Dr. Rigdon said. "My sisters and I share a desire to impact the future of professional nursing by supporting the leadership education of nurses."

Mary Byrne Stewart (1907-1962) grew up in St. Joseph and graduated from a nursing program in the Chicago area. She was a pioneer nurse anesthetist, administering anesthesia for patients of her father, Dr. John Ignatius Byrne, a prominent St. Joseph general practitioner and surgeon; a dentist; and another physician.

Rigdon earned her Ph.D. and is an advanced practice registered nurse, Lunsford is a retired nurse and Tabor is a licensed clinical social worker.

Susan Campbell '01, founder and president of SJC Marketing, established the **SJC Marketing Scholarship** with first preference given to nontraditional students with a marketing major. Students must have a minimum cumulative GPA of 3.0 and must have completed at least 30 credit

hours and be classified as a sophomore.

"I wanted to create an opportunity that may help a student attain a goal that was previously out of reach," Campbell said. "Our scholarship will give preference to a nontraditional student who wants to pursue a marketing degree. This was the same path I took and it's an honor to recognize someone else doing the same thing."

SJC Marketing is a full-service contemporary marketing/communication, content creation and branding company. Campbell started it in 2005.

"College was a great time for me and opened up so many doors in my career. The quality of the curriculum and the professors is exceptional," she said. "It's an important local asset and one that I want to continue to support."

For Don Stallard, M.D., establishing a scholarship at Missouri Western seemed a great way to honor his wife, Loah, so he recently made a gift to the Missouri Western Foundation to create the **Loah Stallard Graduate Nursing Scholarship**.

Loah was the Executive Director of the Social Welfare Board from 1979 to 2006, and since 2006, has been a Health Educator there.

"I am very honored; I didn't expect it," she said of the scholarship. "And I am glad it is going to help the nursing program at Missouri Western." She noted that the University's two graduate-degree tracks (nurse educator and health care leadership) address critical needs right now.

Loah graduated with her Bachelor of Science in Nursing from the University of Iowa. She met Don there,



Loah Stallard

who was completing his residency at the University of Iowa Hospitals. Loah stayed home to raise their four children before joining the Social Welfare Board in 1979. She returned to graduate school shortly after she was hired by the Social Welfare Board and earned a Master of Science in Nursing from the University of Kansas. She later earned a second master's degree in public administration with an emphasis in health care from the University of Missouri-Kansas City.

Under Loah's guidance, the Social Welfare Board added dental services, gynecological services, a dietitian, crisis counseling, cardiovascular screening, arthritis services and a diabetic food program. She was one of the first to recognize the importance of using nurses with master's degrees to provide the care in ambulatory clinics, especially in underserved and rural areas.

"People are so appreciative, you are making a change in their lives," she said of her work at the Social Welfare

*continued on page 32*



## Faithful, proud and true: Byron '55 and Phyllis '55 Myers

Byron '55 and Phyllis '55 Myers have spent a lifetime creating a legacy of music, devoting almost all of their adult lives to the New Generation Singers in St. Joseph, Missouri.

Byron founded the group in 1970 and served as musical director until 1998, and Phyllis has helped with the fundraising and bookkeeping since it began. The couple estimates about 6,000 youth have been a part of the group over the past 47 years, and Byron and Phyllis can proudly name many, many New Generation Singers alumni in successful careers today.

The group, housed at Ashland United Methodist Church, is for youth in their second semester of eighth-grade through college.

The first year, there were 27 members and they spent a week performing in Texas. Last summer, the group of 88 traveled to eight states over 15 days.

Byron and Phyllis continue to help plan the Singers' annual tours and travel with the group. Byron has been on every tour, and Phyllis has only missed one.

"Every year, they ask, 'Are you going this year?'" Phyllis said. "And we say, of course."

"It's a Christian group. There's a very strong bond that grows among the singers and they make lifelong friends," she said.

Byron and Phyllis met in choir at Central High School and dated throughout their Junior College days. The two were in musicals together, and there's even a photo in the 1955 yearbook of Byron singing a love song to Phyllis in an operetta. "We did a lot together, it was fun," Phyllis said.

In fact, Byron proposed at the Junior College on the evening of their induction into Delta Psi Omega, a theatre honor society. Longtime music professor Roberta Riemer held the ring for him during the induction ceremony.

The couple married in 1956 and have two children, five grandchildren (one is currently a student at Missouri Western) and four great grandchildren.

Byron's career included teaching music at Central High School, serving as an associate minister (he was ordained as a minister of the Christian Church), and running two businesses, including a music store. Phyllis was a member and Byron director of the local Sweet Adelines for 40 years, and the group competed successfully for many years.

Additionally, Byron traveled all over the country teaching barbershop quartet directors as part of the Barbershop Harmony Society and was instrumental in bringing the society's Harmony University to Missouri Western, where the society held their conference for more than 35 years.

Phyllis was named Outstanding Young Woman of the Year in 1967 and Byron Outstanding Young Educator of the Year in 1968 by the St. Joseph Junior Chamber of Commerce. Additionally, Byron was awarded the Alumni Association's Distinguished Alumni Award in 1990.

He has also served as president of the St. Joseph Symphony Board and is president of the Allied Arts Council this year.

And throughout all their music-laden years, Byron and Phyllis continued to be avid supporters of Missouri Western. When the new



Byron '55 and Phyllis '55 Myers

campus was being built in the late 1960s Byron's dad was superintendent for the construction of Popplewell Hall (then A Building). He called them to come out and watch the walls going up with a new type of construction. "He told us, 'You need to come out, history is being made,'" Byron said.

Byron and Phyllis regularly attend Missouri Western's musical and theatre performances. Phyllis is a member of the Alumni Association Board of Directors, serving as the Forever Griffons committee chair. Their daughter-in-law, Carol, has directed musical theatre at Missouri Western, and their grandson was in "The Wedding Singer" in the spring of 2017.

"We try to go to everything we can to be supportive," Byron said.

And, of course, they said they always encourage youth in the New Generation Singers to consider Missouri Western, because the Myers are faithful, proud and true to the black and gold. ■

## From the Alumni Association President

Dear Fellow Alumni,

This is my second letter as President of the Alumni Association, and I am so proud to report on all of the successes from this year's Homecoming! It was a chilly weekend but warm with Griffon spirit.

Mary Vaughan, last year's president, set the goal of trying to increase spirit during Homecoming. We started an alumni subcommittee led by the Association's Vice President Jim Jeffers to work on ideas to get alumni more involved in Homecoming this year. Through the hard work of the Board, Jim, his committee and many others, I am proud to announce some of the results from these efforts.

### New for 2017:

- We added more social media to our announcements this year so alumni near or far could take part, and we did our first **Black and Gold Day**
- We held an **Alumni Employee Breakfast** for Missouri Western alumnni employees
- We initiated **Support a Griffon Business Day**
- We started **Legacy Day**. This was an online giving day coordinated by the Graduates of the Last Decade (GOLD) Network chaired by Emily Baumann '10. Our goal was



Natalie Redmond '00

to raise \$10,000. With a matching gift from the Danford Family Excellence Fund, we raised \$10,700 from 90 donors with gifts ranging from \$5-\$1,000. We were thrilled with the success of this. Thanks to everyone who donated or supported Legacy Day! What a great Legacy we started.

• We also reformatted the **Alumni Awards Banquet**, which got rave reviews. We had outstanding award winners again this year with a record crowd at the banquet to celebrate them. Congrats to the award winners (see p. 28-30)! Additionally, there were the annual

events: the **parade**, **Future Griffon breakfast**, **Arts, Beats and Treats**; the **tailgate** and the **game**. Thanks to the board and volunteers, and MWSU staff, students and alumni who made the 2017 Homecoming one to remember!

We are certainly off to a great start for the year. However, we would love to get your feedback or involvement in the Alumni Association. Please reach out to me at (816) 261-3610 or redmond@saintjoseph.com.

With Griffon Pride,

*Natalie Redmond*

Natalie Redmond '00  
President, Alumni Association

**Happy Birthday**

**Congratulations to Dr. M.O. Looney, president of Missouri Western from 1967-1983, who celebrated his 90th birthday on Nov. 9, 2017.**



## Coming Events

<b>Jan. 15</b>	Martin Luther King Day, no classes/campus closed
<b>Jan. 16</b>	Spring semester starts
<b>Feb. 19</b>	President's Day, classes in session/campus open
<b>March 1</b>	Deadline to nominate for the Alumni Association Awards
<b>March 11-18</b>	Spring Break, no classes/campus open
<b>March 19-23</b>	Entrepreneurship Week on campus
<b>May 5</b>	Commencement, Spratt Memorial Stadium

## Alumni trip to Israel

Colleen Kowich, director of Alumni Relations, and Dr. Jimmy Albright are planning a 10-day trip to Israel for alumni and friends of Missouri Western. The trip will take place May 22-31, 2018.

"We couldn't have hoped for a better guide than Dr. Albright," Kowich said. "His experience and knowledge of Israel and the Middle East will greatly enhance the trip."

Dr. Albright has made more than 50 trips to 22 countries in Europe and the Middle East, and has supervised archeological excavations all over Israel. He has taught archeology classes at Missouri Western as an adjunct professor since 1980, and continues to teach today.

The trip is through Jerusalem Tours International. Cost is \$3,669 per person for double occupancy (add \$749 per person for a single room). Call Kowich at (816) 271-5650 or check out missouriwestern.edu/alumni/Israel for more information. ■



# Alumni Awards Banquet honors 13

## Eight new awards in 2017

The Missouri Western Alumni Association honored 13 people with 12 awards at its annual awards banquet Homecoming weekend. Eight Great Griffon Awards and Student Leadership Awards were new this year, honoring alumni from each of the University's Colleges and Schools, and three graduating seniors.

The following were honored at the 2017 Alumni Association Awards Banquet:

### James Sheehan '78

#### *Distinguished Alumni Award*

James Sheehan '78 has had a career with Hormel that spans almost four decades. In 1979, he was hired as an accountant for the company and today is the Senior Vice President and Chief Financial Officer for the Fortune 500 company. His current leadership role oversees the critical financial and



accounting functions, which includes five departments: accounting, treasury, internal audit, investor relations, and information technology services.

In addition to his Bachelor of Science in Business Administration from Missouri Western, he is a graduate of the Minnesota Executive Program at the Carlson School of Management at the University of Minnesota.

Sheehan is also very involved in community service, serving on a variety of boards for nonprofit organizations.

He and his wife, Jeanne, have two sons.



### Dr. Jeff Poet

#### *Distinguished Faculty Award*

Dr. Jeff Poet, professor of mathematics, joined the Missouri Western faculty in 2002, and helping students succeed has been at the forefront of his career ever since.

In 2006, he teamed with Dr. Todd Eckdahl, professor of biology, and colleagues from Davidson College in North Carolina to guide undergraduate students in synthetic biology research. That collaboration led to the team's obtaining three National Science Foundation research grants totaling about \$2.3 million and publishing in several prestigious publications.

Dr. Poet earned a Bachelor of Arts in Mathematics from Ottawa University, a Master of Science in Technology and Mathematics Education from Kansas State University, and a PhD. in Algebraic Graph Theory and Combinatorics from the University of Wyoming.

He says the mix of classroom teaching and guiding student research is what makes his job great. "As long as I have students in front of me, I'm happy," he said.

Dr. Poet and his wife, Laura, have eight children, including two daughters who are alumnae.

### John Klindt '11

#### *GOLD Award*

In 2008, John Klindt '11 realized that if he wanted to advance his career, he needed to earn a degree. So, at the age of 40, he enrolled at Missouri Western and earned a Bachelor of Science in Electronics Engineering Technology.

Shortly after earning his degree, he began working for FedEx Ground in Kansas City as a Maintenance Service Manager and today is the Facility Maintenance Manager for the company. In that position, Klindt oversees the repair and maintenance of all material handling equipment, buildings and grounds with a staff of 12. He has received numerous awards for his work.

Klindt, from Bethany, Missouri, is very involved in community service, helping groups such as the Children's Place, Kansas City School for the Blind, United Way and Ronald McDonald House.

"Missouri Western provided me with so many opportunities because of the coursework and the interest the professors took in my progress," he said.

Klindt and his wife, Kate, have a son and a daughter.

### Tom and Patsy '95 Smith

#### *Herb '35 and Peggy Iffert Award for Outstanding Service to the University*

Tom and Patsy '95 Smith have served Missouri Western, specifically



Missouri Western Athletics, for more than two decades. Tom retired in 2012 as the head men's

basketball coach, a position he held for 25 years, and Patsy retired in 2014 as the Senior Associate Director of Athletics and Senior Woman Administrator after a 20-year career.

In those very visible positions, Tom and Patsy have been outstanding ambassadors for and representatives of Missouri Western across the country.

When Patsy graduated, she was hired as business manager for athletics and has held many positions for the department over the years, including interim director.

Tom retired as the all-time leader in wins at Missouri Western, closing out a 38-year career as basketball coach with more than 600 wins. As a Griffon, he holds five MIAA regular-season championships, four MIAA postseason championships, 11 NCAA tournament appearances and 12 seasons with 20+ wins.

"Missouri Western has done so much for both of us," Patsy said. "It's been the core of our lives. Anytime we can give back, we willingly do that."

### Mary Elizabeth (Schmitz)

#### *Porter '99*

#### *Great Griffon Award*

#### *College of Liberal Arts and Sciences*



After graduation, Mary Elizabeth (Schmitz) Porter '99 earned a Doctorate

of Pharmacy from University of Missouri-Kansas City in 2004 and has been the Clinical Coordinator at Liberty (Missouri) Hospital for the past 12 years.

Porter, a native of Clarksdale, Missouri, is an active member of several professional associations and likes that she can make a difference in her patients' lives. As a Missouri Western student, Porter participated in marching band and the symphonic winds, and a study away trip to Mexico, all of which created great memories.

"Missouri Western was a gateway to my future," she said. "It helped prepare me for pharmacy school and provided me with a solid educational foundation for my pharmacy career."

She and her husband, Jeff, have one daughter.



### LaShaundra Randolph '03

#### *Great Griffon Award*

#### *College of Professional Studies*

LaShaundra Randolph '03, a native of Harvey, Illinois, graduated with a degree in criminal justice and worked as a youth specialist at a maximum security facility before deciding she wanted to work in higher education. She earned a master's in higher education administration from University of Missouri-Kansas City, and today serves as a Project Coordinator for Metropolitan Community College-Penn Valley.

While serving at University of Missouri-Kansas City as a coordinator

for student activities, she founded and directed the Kangaroo Food Pantry. In her current position, she works specifically with minority retention initiatives. Randolph has also served in several leadership roles with the National Association for Campus Activities and was recently elected to its board of directors. She also volunteers with the Delta Sigma Theta Sorority.

Randolph is currently working on her Doctorate of Educational Administration/Urban Higher Education emphasis.

### Corky Marquart '84

#### *Great Griffon Award*

#### *Craig School of Business*

Corky Marquart '84 is the Market President and CEO of Commerce Bank.

Marquart, a Union Star, Missouri native, earned a Bachelor of Science in Business Administration in Accounting. She was working as a Bank Examiner for the Federal Reserve Bank of Kansas City when Commerce Bank offered her a position as Controller. She held several positions with Commerce Bank in the years since and was named Market President in January 2014.

"I enjoy the opportunity to help customers realize their goals and mentor employees to reach their potential," she said of her position.

Marquart is an avid community volunteer. She served on the Missouri Western Foundation Board of Directors, including a term as chair; and currently serves on the Craig School of Business Advisory Council.

Marquart and her husband, Keith, have a son and a daughter.



*continued on page 30*



## Marrita Black '75

*Great Griffon Award  
School of Fine Arts*

After graduating from Missouri Western, Marrita Black '75 operated a horse training facility in Gainesville, Texas, where she trained, showed and sold horses from across North America, South America and Japan. Today she is a professional sculptor.

Her commissioned life-size bronze sculptures of quarter horses can be found all over the country, including one on the campus of Oklahoma State University, installed in 2016.

"Often when I'm sculpting I will hear the words of one of the art instructors at Missouri Western – 'just sculpt what you see, really look at your model,'" she said.

Black, who graduated from high school in Wathena, Kansas, welcomes visitors to her studio and presents workshops at schools in the Gainesville area. She served on the American Quarter Horse Foundation for 15 years.

Her husband is Dr. F. Robert "Bob" Black. "All my kids have four legs," she says.

## Diane Waddell '66/'91

*Great Griffon Award  
School of Nursing and Health*

### Professions

Diane Waddell '66/'91 is a nurse practitioner at Mosaic Life Care, but she is just as likely to be identified by

her passion for environmental advocacy. She serves on numerous national and regional organizations related to environmental sustainability and

justice, including the Presbyterians for Earth Care. Waddell has presented at and chaired conferences across the country on issues related to both health care and the environment.

As a nurse practitioner, Waddell said she offers a model of health which incorporates openness to yoga, meditation, personal training, reflexology, chiropractic and more.

As part of her environmental and church work, she has taken study trips, medical mission trips and social-justice oriented trips across the globe.

She and her husband, Bob, have two daughters.

## BreAuna Watkins '17

*Student Leadership Award  
Clifford Hughes '55 Award*

BreAuna Watkins '17, from St. Louis, graduated this past May with a communications major and plans to attend graduate school to become a speech pathologist. Watkins was a great student leader, serving as president of the Black Student Union, as a mentor in the Students of Color Orientation and a resident assistant in the residence halls. In 2015, she was the student recipient of the Drum Major for Justice Award.

## Deir Montiel Dominguez '17

*Student Leadership Award  
International Student of the Year*

From the moment Deir Montiel Dominguez '17 stepped on Missouri Western's campus in the summer of 2014, he has been an excellent ambassador for international students, International Student Services and the University. Dominguez graduated in December 2017 with a degree in International Studies

and Spanish Culture and Literature. He plans to pursue a law degree with an emphasis in immigration law.

## Reyhan Wilkinson '17

*Student Leadership Award  
Graduating Student of the Year*

Reyhan Wilkinson '17 graduated in May with a Bachelor of Science in Business Administration in Accounting. He is currently a leader trainer at U.S. Bank.

As a student, Wilkinson was involved in several student organizations and held leadership positions in several of them. He also served on the Alumni Association Board of Directors as a student. ■



## Nominate someone today!

*Nominations for all Alumni Association awards may be submitted year round online at missouriwestern.edu/alumni. Along with the nomination form, a letter stating why you believe the person deserves this award must accompany the application. The deadline is March 1 each year. Current members of the Alumni Association Board of Directors are not eligible for nomination.*



Natalie Redmond '00, president of the Alumni Association; and Dr. Robert Vartabedian, Missouri Western's president; are pictured with the three Student Leadership Award recipients: Reyhan Wilkinson '17, BreAuna Watkins '17 and Deir Montiel Dominguez '17.

## 1970s

**Mary Ann Wilkerson '72/'87** retired from the City of Savannah, Missouri as a class A water plant operator in June 2017.

**Carol Hartigan '73**, certification and policy strategist for the American Association of Critical Care Nurses and the AACN Certification Corporation, received the Lifetime Achievement Award from the Institute of Credentialing Excellence. This is the Institute's highest award, recognizing the lifetime achievement of individuals whose vision, efforts, commitment and contributions have advanced the credentialing industry. Since the award began in 1999, Hartigan is just the sixth person and the first women to receive this award.

**Dave Scheer '79** was inducted into the inaugural Union (Missouri) High School Athletic Hall of Fame. He was a teacher and coach in the Union School District for 35 years and played baseball at Missouri Western from 1977-79.

## 1980s



**Dr. Mark Woodhull '83** was appointed director of graduate business education at Schreiner University in Kerrville, Texas. Dr. Woodhull

is a professor of business and information technology management and has been with Schreiner University since 2001.



**Shawn Malone '87** was promoted to vice president of sourcing, GE Appliances and is responsible for building and leading a \$4.5 billion global sourcing organization that will help drive GE Appliances growth. Prior to joining GE in 1998, Malone taught chemistry at the United States Military Academy at West Point, New York.

**Maggie (Harris) Degenhardt '88** earned a specialist degree in education leadership from Columbus State University. She is currently an assistant principal with Rockdale County, Georgia School District.

## Alumnnotes

**Darren Thomas '89** retired from the U.S. Air Force/Texas Air National Guard as a lieutenant colonel with 29 years of service in July 2015. In May 2017, he was promoted to Highway Patrol sergeant in the Longview, Texas office after 15 years of service with the Texas Department of Public Safety.

## 1990s

**Vickie Clark '90, MSW, LCSW** joined Northwest Health Services. She earned a bachelor's degree in social work from Missouri Western and a master's in social work from the University of Kansas.

**Christal Bemont '92**, Senior Vice President and General Manager of Global Small and Medium Business Sales at Concur, was featured in a Fit Small Business article on cash flow management advice.

**Kim Vento '92** is the executive director of the Broken Arrow Performing Arts Center in Broken Arrow, Oklahoma.

**Christopher Archer '97** is vice president, Quality Management, for Nestlé Purina PetCare North America. Chris and his wife, Lara Peppers Archer '97, relocated back to St. Louis from Lausanne, Switzerland, where Chris had been on an expatriate assignment with Nestlé as the Global Quality and Food Safety Director for Cereal Partners Worldwide.

**Mary (Schmitz) Porter '99** and her husband, Jeff, announce the birth of a daughter, JoAnna Marie, born June 27, 2017. Leo '48 and Mary Ann '68/'70 Schmitz are the grandparents.

## 2000s



**Nic (Eveleigh-Wilson) Stevens '00/'08** is the newspaper operations director at the St. Joseph News-Press and Gazette Company.



**Quinten Lovejoy '02** joined the Charles L. Crane Agency as a founding member of its Kansas City branch. The Charles L. Crane Agency is the oldest

independent insurance agency west of the Mississippi River and insures companies in all 50 states and a number of foreign countries. His wife is Sabrina Lovejoy '01.

**Stacia Studer '02** was honored as Northwest Missouri Regional Teacher of the Year in July 2017. She is currently an eighth-grade English language arts teacher at Bode Middle School.



**Melody (Grier) Shaw '04** and her husband, Sydney, announce the birth of a son, Sydney Silvester-Ralph, born Aug. 31, 2017. He joins a sister, Melana.



**Josie '05 and William '05 Foster** announce the birth of a son, Jon Wesley, born on July 4, 2016. He joined a sister, Evelyn. Josie

founded a company, Sight Source, in February 2017. Sight Source partners with industry-leading eye banks to provide high-quality ocular tissue for surgeons and researchers. She also partnered with a nonprofit and donates a portion of her profits to pay for a surgeon to travel to one of her company's partner hospitals in another county to perform gratis corneal work.

**Elijah Haahr '05** joined the law firm of Lathrop Gage as part of its product liability, toxic and mass tort team in Springfield, Missouri.

**Joey '08 and Sarah '09 Harris** announce the birth of a daughter, Vivian Leigh, born June 20, 2017. The Harrises also have a son, Everett Joe Harris IV.

**Scott Weston '05** was named head coach for the new intercollegiate women's volleyball program at Hawkeye Community College in Waterloo, Iowa.



## 2010s



**Jenn Cammann '10** and Dalton Powers were married April 8, 2017. The couple resides in St. Peters, Missouri.

**Elizabeth Bertram '15** was selected for a one-year clerkship with the North Dakota Supreme Court for the 2018-19 term beginning Aug. 1, 2018. She is expected to receive her Juris Doctorate from the Sandra Day O'Connor College of Law, Arizona State University, in May 2018.

**Alex Atkinson '16** is the director of expansion for Phi Delta Theta Fraternity general headquarters. He had been serving as expansion consultant.

**Crystal Poole '16** is a conservation agent for Caldwell County in Missouri.

**Caitlyn Taylor '17** and **Riley Wilson '17** were married June 17, 2017 in St. Joseph, Missouri.

**Kayla White '17** earned a perfect score on the physical therapist assistant licensing exam from the Federation of State Boards of Physical Therapy. She is currently working for the Wathena (Kansas) Healthcare and Rehabilitation Center and LaVerna Village of St. Joseph. ■

## In Memory

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

**Shelly J. Athay '94**, St. Joseph, Missouri, Sept. 19, 2017.

**Judy Botts '05**, Grandview, Missouri, July 27, 2017.

**Jeffery M. Brown '77**, St. Joseph, Missouri, Oct. 7, 2017.

**Katherine L. Bruns '09**, Colorado Springs, Colorado, Sept. 14, 2017.

**Vincent Carolus '48**, St. Joseph, Missouri, July 21, 2017.

**Lorri Hamm '00/'02**, Faucett, Missouri, Sept. 13, 2017.

**James D. Hopkins '89**, Highland, Kansas, July 24, 2017.

**Michael J. Huffer '75**, St. Joseph, Missouri, Sept. 22, 2017.

**Carol F. (Bowland) Jackson '73**, St. Joseph, Missouri, June 21, 2017.

**Pamela M. Lloyd '81**, St. Joseph, Missouri, Aug. 22, 2017.

**Bonnie Louise Mathers**, Tarkio, Missouri, June 17, 2017. Bonnie retired from Missouri Western's Purchasing Office in 1991.

**Dale G. Meyer '87**, Oregon, Missouri (formerly of Cortez, Colorado), Aug. 11, 2017.

**Vera Onkoba '03**, St. Joseph, Missouri, July 26, 2017.

**Jaime L. Ramirez '81**, Kansas City, Missouri, Oct. 13, 2017.

**Barry L. Reynolds '72**, St. Joseph, Missouri, June 20, 2017.

**John R. Steinbrenner '84**, Gold Canyon, Arizona, July 23, 2017.

**Carolyn J. Steppe '75**, St. Joseph, Missouri, Aug. 18, 2017.

**Charles Robert Stinson '52**, St. Joseph, Missouri, July 24, 2017.

**Michael Henry Stroud '89/'92**, St. Joseph, Missouri, July 21, 2017.

**Andrew Tyhurst '12**, Kansas City, Missouri, July 5, 2017.

**Paul H. Von Fischbach '13**, St. Joseph, Missouri, Oct. 11, 2017.

**William Waller '55**, Faucett, Missouri, July 13, 2017.

**Donna L. Witte '95**, Kansas City, Missouri, Aug. 18, 2017.

# A CANNON'S TALE

It was the early '80s. The Phi Sigma Kappa Fraternity was popular on campus and could always be counted on to cheer loudly at football games.

One day, one of the members had an idea. He wanted to build a cannon and shoot it off every time the Griffons scored a touchdown.



From the 1991 yearbook.

Dirck Clark '85 was a member of the Phi Sigs and suggested enlisting help from his grandfather, Jimmy Boatright, who was a farmer in the Savannah, Missouri, area. Clark and his fraternity brothers, his grandfather and his uncle Ernie Bowman got together on the farm and started to build.

"Our job was to make smart aleck comments and get in the way," Clark said of the students helping.

No plans were drawn up for the cannon, and parts were found around the farm. The wheels, for example, came from a horse-drawn drill planter that Clark estimates is at least 100 years old now.

The actual building of the cannon wasn't too difficult, but the firing mechanism took more thought, Clark said. The first mechanism used gunpowder and "rocked the stadium."

The fraternity's advisor, longtime chemistry professor Dr. Len Archer, told them they needed to come up with a safer mechanism before "someone gets nicknamed Lefty."

With Dr. Archer's help, they did: a gas-filled balloon that was ignited with a blow torch. It worked well and no one lost a limb.

Clark says the cannon, nicknamed The General, continued to be used for several years after he graduated, but by the mid-1990s, it was no longer part of the games. Then the fraternity disbanded on campus and the cannon was lost. Clark said he searched for it for years.

Finally, in 2011, someone told him they thought they had seen pieces of it in a junk pile. By that time, the Phi Sigs had returned to campus, and were only too happy to restore it.

"It looks like the day we built it," Clark said. "I am so happy and so proud of what they did. I wish my grandfather could see it (he passed away in 1987)."

The cannon was fired during the 2012 and 2013 football seasons and at the end of the 2014 Commencement ceremony in Spratt Memorial Stadium,

but now it stands at attention near the end zone of Craig Field. The General may not make much noise these days, but it remains a monument to Griffon spirit, fraternity brotherhood and good old-fashioned ingenuity. ■



Phi Sigma Kappa Fraternity members Michael Bushnell '84 and Dirck Clark '85 pose with the cannon that was made by the fraternity with the help of Clark's grandfather and uncle.

*continued from page 25*

## Donors establish four scholarships

Board.

Throughout her career, Loah also served on numerous community and state organizations' boards, including the Missouri Western Foundation Board for 12 years. She received the YWCA's Women of Excellence Lifetime Achievement Award in 2007.

Don, who practiced internal medicine in St. Joseph for 35 years, said it was important to him that

the scholarship be endowed so it would continue into the future. He and Loah also wanted to make it for graduate-level students to ensure that the recipients were committed to the nursing field long-term. Students from Buchanan County who are interested in working with underserved and under-insured populations will be given preference.

Don said he wants to encourage others to donate to the scholarship in

Loah's honor.

An article about the **B-FIT CrossFit Veterans Scholarship** is on p. 23.

In other Missouri Western Foundation scholarship news, the scholarship that was established in 2016 to honor Dr. Len Archer, professor emeritus of chemistry, has reached the endowment level of \$10,000, thanks to a number of recent gifts. ■





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## Homecoming 2017

The Legend of Griffon Hollow was another great week of events and memory-makers. Students, alumni, employees and community members enjoyed the variety of activities. ■

