

CROSSROADS

MISSOURI SOUTHERN STATE UNIVERSITY | SPRING 2021



AROUND THE WORLD

Senior Addie Siebenthal
embraces the global classroom

Unique campus resource turns 10

Family celebrates four generations of Lion Pride



from the editor

Stephanie Goad, the university's international recruitment and admissions coordinator, has a quote in her email signature from author, artist and professional speaker Mary Anne Radmacher: "I am not the same having seen the moon shine on the other side of the world."

It caught my eye recently as I was thinking about what to say about this Fall 2021 issue of Crossroads magazine. In a way, it encapsulates the international approach that Missouri Southern has emphasized since it was adopted into our mission statement in 1990. Today, our mission is still to "educate and graduate knowledgeable, responsible, successful global citizens."

There are a number of ways the university works to broaden our students' global and cultural horizons.

In the fall of 1997, MSSU began offering an annual themed semester focusing on a different country or region. This fall is the Japan Semester, and has featured presentations on the country's history and culture. From a look at how Godzilla became a cultural icon, to film screenings, samples of Japanese cuisine and a visit by the Bunraku Bay Puppet Theater, there's truly been something for everyone.

Another way MSSU students can learn more about other cultures is through our study abroad program. We have agreements with 16 partner universities around the world, and many other opportunities through the International Student Exchange Program.

A recurring theme in this issue is how international travel has affected our students.

In our cover story, you'll meet senior Addie Siebenthal, who has taken full advantage of the study abroad options by studying in five different countries. You'll also hear from a South Korean student who studied here during the spring and summer – keeping an online journal about her experiences at MSSU.

And you can read about Jedediah Buck, whose research into a local family and their travels overseas that are now collected in an online database offered through the Spiva Library archives.

Elsewhere in this issue, you'll learn about the anniversary of one of the most unique lab offerings in the region, meet a four-generation family of Lions, and catch up on a celebration of "Decades of Southern Spirit" during our Homecoming festivities.

It's always a pleasure to share our story with you. If you have a story idea, news or comment, we want to hear from you. Drop us a line at crossroads@mssu.edu.

Thanks for reading! Enjoy the holiday season and we'll catch up with you again in 2022!

Editor
Crossroads Magazine
Missouri Southern State University

Dr. Dean Van Galen
President

Dr. Brad Hodson
Executive Vice President

Lorinda Hackett
Interim Provost/Vice President
for Academic Affairs

Rob Yust
Vice President
for Business Affairs

Julie Wengert
Interim Vice President
for Student Affairs

Rob Mallory
Director of Athletics

Crossroads Magazine is
produced by the
Office of University Relations
and Marketing.

Chloe McMain, Interim Director
Scott Meeker
Curtis Almeter
Pat Nagel
Reid Williams
Brad Belk
Megan Vest

Special Contributors
Kevin Greim
Lee Elliff Pound
Amanda Stone
Justin Maskus

Crossroads is produced
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— **Our Lion Alumni** —

Pictured Left to Right Paige, '19 | Crystal '98 | Carrie, '10 | J.E., '98 | Deron, '92 | John, '05 | Brett, '17 | Amy '93 | Stephanie, '02

Locations in Joplin and Seneca

FROM THE PRESIDENT



Greetings from Missouri Southern! The fall semester started on a high note, and I wish all Crossroads readers could have joined our staff and faculty in welcoming students to campus in August.

I share with you the two themes in the conversations I enjoyed with new and returning students. First, students were truly excited to return to more face-to-face classes and activities, and they appreciated our efforts to do so safely. They told me they valued the personal relationships and experiences that have long been a hallmark of a Missouri Southern education. The other theme was how important the unique learning experiences offered by MSSU were to their educational experience.

This issue of Crossroads highlights examples of our engaging campus environment and student experiences that help set MSSU apart. You will learn about the amazing international experiences of Addie Siebenthal, who studied in five countries and devoted her summer to a research project in Armenia. You will also learn about how our campus cadaver lab — celebrating its 10-year anniversary — provides learning opportunities that are rare as part of an undergraduate education. As a campus, we are committed to providing such “immersive learning environments,” in part, because there is clear evidence that student learning and success are enhanced when students are engaged in these opportunities.

In telling the remarkable story of a four-generation MSSU family, this edition of Crossroads also reminds us of how our university has impacted lives and uplifted Joplin, the Four States region, and beyond for decades. Over the past year, I have enjoyed many conversations with alumni who told me how the opportunity to attend MSSU changed the course of their lives. In doing so, they often cited faculty and staff including Dr. Conrad Gubera, Dr. Al Cade, Dr. Pat Lipira, Darren Fullerton, and others who were outstanding educators, mentors and role models. It’s all a reminder that the arc of the university and the region are inextricably connected. The university is not an island, it is a bridge to our community and to the future.

Whether it be through philanthropic support, encouraging a prospective student to consider Missouri Southern, or serving as an ambassador for the university in your community, you are making a difference. We are grateful for your support!

Enjoy this issue of Crossroads, and Go Lions!

Lions Together,

Dr. Dean Van Galen
President, MSSU



PROJECTS UNDERWAY TO IMPROVE SAFETY, AESTHETICS OF CAMPUS

Construction began this fall on a series of projects that will significantly enhance the safety, accessibility and aesthetics of the Missouri Southern campus.

“Missouri Southern has a unique opportunity this year to utilize some federal and state funding that is designated for capital improvement. In addition to a number of deferred maintenance projects (roofs, boilers, chillers, etc.), the university has decided to address several safety and accessibility issues in and around the Oval,” said Dr. Brad Hodson, executive vice president.

“These include street replacement; more visible crosswalks; a dedicated path across the main parking lot from the

residence halls; a safer, better lit, drier tunnel; and wider sidewalks and building entrances on the Oval.”

The federal and state funds are provided exclusively for capital construction and can’t be used for anything other than capital projects. Aesthetic improvements to campus will be funded through philanthropic dollars via the Missouri Southern Foundation.

“The end results will represent a huge leap in safety, accessibility, and aesthetic quality of our core campus,” said Hodson “We’re confident that when they are completed, everyone associated with Missouri Southern will be very proud of the improvements.”



LION VILLAGE DESIGNED WITH NEEDS OF STUDENTS IN MIND

As she watched construction progress on the new Lion Village residence complex, Maddie Dees knew it was a place she wanted to live.

"I'm a (resident assistant) and we don't really get to choose our housing, but we submit the top 3 places we'd like to be," she said.

Dees, a senior nursing major, wound up in one of the four-person suites and says the experience has been great.

"It's really nice here," she said. "I like the modern feel to it. There's a lot of study rooms, a theater, and there are always people hanging out in the lobby."

The 94,000-square-foot, four-story Lion Village houses more than 300 students in a combination of four-bedroom suites, traditional two-bedroom units and private rooms. It was built with students' needs in mind, said Josh Doak, director of Residence Life.

"One of the big focuses of the design of this building was on community and student engagement," he said.

Among the amenities offered in the new residence complex are open common spaces, unlimited access to multiple laundry rooms, meeting rooms and private study areas, Wi-Fi and a 12-person theater. It also includes two elevators and a card-scan entry system.

The \$20-million project was funded through the sale of bonds. It was designed by Paragon Architecture, with R.E. Smith Construction Co. overseeing construction.



TALENT SEARCH PROGRAM RECEIVES FIVE-YEAR GRANT

The Educational Talent Search program at MSSU has received a federal grant of more than \$1.5 million that will continue to fund the program for the next five years.

The grant is for \$300,675 per year – for a total of \$1,503,375 – and took effect on Sept. 1.

Part of the federal TRIO programs, Talent Search serves students in grades 6 through 12, working to identify and assist students from disadvantaged backgrounds who have the potential to succeed in postsecondary education. To be considered for the program, students must attend either the Joplin, Carl Junction, Carthage, Webb City or Sarcoxie school districts.

"We come into the schools and recruit students, almost like college recruiters," said Jim Kimbrough, director of MSSU Talent Search. "We work to educate the students on what they need to do in high school to prepare for success in college."

Participants are encouraged to enroll in challenging levels of study at the high-school level, and receive academic advising, tutoring, visits to college and university campuses, and opportunities for job shadowing and career exploration.

Talent Search grants are awarded on a five-year basis. Kimbrough said the application – submitted in December 2020 – is data heavy and focuses on a demonstrated need for the program.

"There are target goals for the objectives, and we exceeded each of those," he said.



ICONIC SCULPTURE GETS A MAKEOVER

Dating back more than a century to Joplin's storied Connor Hotel, a sculpted lion's head that now sits near Missouri Southern's Fine Arts Building recently got a much-needed makeover.

Brad Belk, the university's community historian, noticed that the piece had experienced some major discoloration over the years.

"I spotted it after a run on the cross-country track," said Belk. "It had a fungus that had discolored its face. Next to the sitting wall and bricks from the old Joplin High School and Joplin Junior College era, it's one of the oldest artifacts on campus."

During four sessions in July, Belk used a brush to apply a cleaning solution in order to restore the work.

"I brushed his teeth so much he won't have to go to the dentist for a while," he said.

The piece was sculpted from Carthage limestone – a unique, pale blue-gray stone that appears almost white in the sunshine. By 1900, it had become a popular alternative to granite for exterior building material.

It was displayed over the main entrance to the Connor Hotel, which opened in 1908. The sculpted work was gifted to the Missouri Southern campus in September of 1985.

THIRD THURSDAY SERVES AS UNIVERSITY SHOWCASE

Downtown Joplin became a showcase for all that Missouri Southern has to offer when the university sponsored the monthly Third Thursday celebration in September.

The event is presented by the Downtown Joplin Alliance and features food trucks, street vendors, entertainment, art and music. The university had nearly 40 booths available.

“We were able to put on a safe event not only for our faculty, staff and students, but also our community,” said Heather Lesmeister, director of communications and external relations.

Among the most attention-grabbing activities was the Wildlife Society booth, which included artwork “painted” by turtles and other animal ambassadors. The Chemical and Physical Sciences booth, joined by the Women in Science Club, offered fun experiments and other activities. Jars of honey straight from the hives on the campus’ prairie land were also hot items.

Roary the lion also served as a central figure of the evening’s festivities, visiting the booths, greeting community members and posing for pictures.

“This is one of the biggest events of the year for us to (engage the community),” said Lesmeister. “It’s very immersive and shows not only the unique educational experiences you can have at Missouri Southern, but that you can have a lot of fun at the same time.”



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VOICES OF SOUTHERN

RIAH JO

Exchange student, winter/summer 2021

The decision to study at Missouri Southern was a matter of broadening her perspective, says Riah Jo.

A senior psychology and marketing major at Duksung Women's University in Seoul, South Korea, she says the idea of studying overseas, gaining new experiences and making new friends was very appealing.

"The reason I chose Missouri Southern is that it's one of the partner schools with my university in Korea," she says. "It has a lot of programs for international students like the International Club, host families and friendship families. I thought those programs would help me adapt to a new environment and they really helped me a lot. I got to know American culture thanks to those programs."

During her time at MSSU, she kept a blog documenting her experiences as an exchange student for those back home. She translated several of those posts back into English to share with Crossroads.

IN THE CLASSROOM

When you get to MSSU, you'll meet someone who helps international students register for classes, and they will ask if you have any classes you want to take. At first, I thought I could handle all of my 13 credit hours with my major classes. But when I looked at Blackboard and the assignments, I thought it would be really tough. I changed two of my classes into yoga and an English-speaking class (Professional Interaction).

Professional Interaction doesn't have any exams, but we have three presentations every week. The professor asks us to participate actively during class by role playing or acting like an audience member when other students are giving a presentation.

The professor for my E-marketing class is Chinese. She is quite eager to communicate with students and she listens to students' opinions quite well. For assignments, you take a quiz and have a discussion with your classmates each week. There are also four exams during the semester. I'm not used to taking exams so frequently, but I'll try to figure it out.

I think I'm adapting to MSSU quite well and I hope there will be more exciting experiences!

FOOD

I've been eating quite a lot in Joplin!

Chipotle is my favorite restaurant in Joplin! I heard a lot of Korean students who come to study in U.S miss Chipotle when they go back to Korea. If you are not used to Mexican food or don't like avocado, you might not like it. I heard that Chipotle is also a fast food but I didn't feel it was like a fast food. I think it's much healthier than other fast foods.

Lambert's is a restaurant in Springfield. You need to go about an hour and half by car and my friendship family took me to this restaurant. This restaurant is famous for

their rolls, the bread. They throw the roll and you need to catch it. They are quite popular. Usually people need to wait in order to enter.

SUPER BOWL PARTY

The Super Bowl is one of the big sports events in the U.S. At first, I didn't know what it was, but everyone was excited about the game because the Kansas City team was in the match. My host family tried to explain how important the event is and explain the rules. I didn't fully understand the rules, but it was fun to watch such a popular sports game in the U.S.

SPRING BREAK

Schools in the U.S. usually have spring break in March for a week and many students go on a trip during their vacation. I went on a trip with other international students to Florida. First, we went to Orlando ... it felt almost like summer. We went to both Disney and Universal Studios. Next, we went to Miami and I spent a whole day at the beach. We also went to Little Havana, where we could see a lot of Cuban culture. All of my friends really enjoyed the beach the most, and I felt we got closer than before during the trip.

WHAT'S NEXT?

I really enjoyed staying here. When I get back to Korea, I still have one semester left, so I need to study and prepare for getting a job by applying for internships based on the experiences I had at Missouri Southern State University.



On the **CUTTING EDGE**

Cadaver lab, now in its 10th year, proves a unique resource for students

On the second day of the Advanced Human Dissection class, students were gathered in small groups around the tables in the university's cadaver lab.

The students talked amongst themselves as they worked, but the tone was different than one might expect in a room that is a hub of activity.

"The cadaver is our first patient," said Rebekah Sweyko, a senior in the advanced medical school acceptance program who will continue her medical studies at KCU next year. "We treat them with the utmost respect, as you would a live patient in the hospital."

Sweyko said the lab was one of the deciding factors when she chose to attend Missouri Southern.

"It's probably one of the best and most applicable resources I could have going into medical school," she said. "The fact that (Missouri Southern) has it is one of the reasons I wanted to come here."

This fall marked the 10th anniversary of the founding of the lab, which is one of the most unique resources for undergraduate students at MSSU.

The lab opened in 2011, but it had been a few years in the making.

"Before we had the cadaver lab, we used one lab in Reynolds for all of the anatomy classes, and we didn't have human dissection," said Dr. Crystal Lemmons, professor of biology and environmental health. "It was way overutilized, with no room to spare."

With the opening of the Julio León Health Sciences Center in 2010, the Dental Hygiene program moved there from their former home in the Ummel Technology Building.

"They had all that wonderful space in Ummel, and (former faculty members) Dr. Jim Jackson and Dr. Vickie Roettger looked into seeing if we could utilize it," Lemmons said. "Having a cadaver lab was something we always wanted to do, but it seemed out of reach because we didn't have the facilities."

The initial lab featured an observation gallery, where students could watch as faculty members taught and utilized one of two cadavers. The creation of an advanced dissection course created a more immersive experience for students, while an expansion in 2018 doubled the amount of available space.

Today, the lab houses eight cadavers – with dedicated spaces for students to work on dissection and study prosected bodies. It has allowed students to conduct anatomical research, and present their findings at national and international conferences.

But it's more than just a resource for students to learn about anatomy, said Dr. Alla Barry, associate professor of biology and director of the lab.

"It's about the ability to see things, analyze findings and put them together to create a diagnosis," she said. "It's like a detective examining footprints to find the guy who did it. Students like this approach because it makes them think, not just memorize."

"It also helps them develop their communication skills, teamwork and professionalism. We also see an increase in empathy and a desire to continue in the (medical) profession."

Students receive only basic information about the whole-body donors they work with in class. Some groups, upon completion of their work, will even receive letters written by donors prior to their death.

"Sometimes the letters are typed, sometimes hand-written," Barry said. "It's very emotional."

Jordan Banker, who graduated from MSSU in May with a degree in biology, is now a student at the University of Colorado School of Medicine. She said her experience working in the cadaver lab helped to prepare her for medical school.

"I took the regular anatomy class, (served as a teacher's assistant) for anatomy and took the dissection class," she said. "You see a lot of variation. No two cadavers are the same. Seeing everything is so valuable. You could learn a lot about anatomy from textbooks, but you lose a lot of the context."

"It's an emotional experience. We have kind of a weird thing about death. It's sacred. But you have to remember that this is what the donors wanted ... for students to learn from them. It's really important to have that in mind, that this is the best way to honor them."



IT'S IN THE GAME

E-sports club formed at Missouri Southern



Long gone are the days of sitting in front of the television, furiously smashing the “up, up, down, down, left, right, left, right, B, A and Start” buttons on the controller to gain an advantage.

Today, e-sports are big business and have spread to college campuses across the country, courting a generation of players who have grown up amid an ever-expanding gamer culture.

Kaden Myers’ interest in video games began at a young age, playing “RuneScape” – a fantasy role-playing game – on the computer.

He lists off the consoles that he’s played regularly on over the years and admires how far graphics have come in such a short time, as well as rise of competitive gaming.

“Gaming has and will always evolve very rapidly, especially competitively,” says Myers, a junior criminal justice major. “Before, you’d have to have all the players go to one certain location and hook up to one server. Now, people can play from home (with people from all over the world).”

As president of recently formed MOSO E-sports Club, Myers is excited at the prospect of building a Missouri Southern team to go head-to-head against teams from other schools, and also just to play recreationally with other Missouri Southern students.

“We have close to 20 people (in the club) right now,” he says. “We definitely want to get into the competitive scene, but that isn’t solely what the group will be about. We want to reach students who just want to hang out and play video games.”

Club members, and those who want to just play recreationally, found a place to get their game on this

fall with the opening of the Midwestern E-sports Center. Located on the first floor of Beimdiek Recreation Center, the 500-square-foot e-sports arena features 12 gaming stations for students to use.

“Midwestern Interactive, a software and design company in Joplin founded by two MSSU alums, agreed to name our facility,” says Steve Benfield, director of Campus Recreation. “We have a variety of PC and consoles, including a PlayStation 5, an Xbox Series S and Nintendo Switch.”

Games that are currently popular in gaming competitions include “Madden NFL 21,” “NBA 2K21,” “Rocket League” and “Call of Duty: Black Ops Cold War.”

Having grown up playing video games, Myers says it’s more than about just recreation. It can also be used as a teaching tool, as within his own field of study. The Criminal Justice Department offers a firearms simulation system, as well as an indoor driving simulator.

“I’m super excited about virtual reality,” says Myers. “It’s coming into practical spaces, such as training military pilots. Not that long ago, it would have been unheard of to think gaming could evolve like this.”



Family Ties

Family boasts four generations of Lion graduates

When Emma Willerton crosses the stage during this December's commencement ceremony, she'll be receiving a trio of degrees for marketing, management and human resources.

Three is an impressive number to be sure, but there's another that is equally important. Willerton will become the fourth generation in her family to earn a degree from Missouri Southern.

Her mother, Rikki Smith, graduated from then Missouri Southern State College in 1996 with a bachelor's degree in English.

Her grandmother, Elaine (Johnston) Smith, got her bachelor's of science in education in 1980.

And her great-grandfather, Calvin W. Smith, got his associate's degree from Joplin Junior College in 1940.

"It wasn't a planned legacy kind of thing ... it just happened," says Willerton of the multi-generation family of Lions.

From JJC to Missouri Southern

Calvin Smith's focus of study was on education, and would go on from JJC to obtain his bachelor's and master's degrees. He taught mathematics at the junior-high level in Joplin, and later served as a vice-principal within the school district. After retiring, he taught in Kansas schools as well. He died in 2010.

"He was my husband's father," says Elaine Smith. "He was a very smart man, and knowledgeable in just about anything and everything."

Rikki Smith remembers him as dedicated to staying on top of teaching methods within the classroom.

"When computers were first going into the high-school level, he was teaching himself how to use them so he could stay on top of that technology," she says.

Elaine Smith began her collegiate journey in 1968, just a year after the opening of the new Missouri Southern College campus on the grounds of the former Mission Hills estate.

"There were only three buildings on the Oval at the time," she says. "When I first started, I was a (physical education) major, so I spent a lot of time in Young Gymnasium."

After becoming engaged and later having two children, Elaine left Missouri Southern for several years. When she returned, it was with a new focus on education. She received her bachelor of science degree in 1980 and taught middle school for a number of years in Joplin and Neosho.

"I worked a lot with at-risk students and also worked with the state's Division of Youth Services, for students who were coming out of the juvenile court system," she says.

Mother and daughter

Rikki Smith says one of her earliest childhood memories was watching her mother graduate from Missouri Southern.

"I remember being in the stands at (Fred G. Hughes) football stadium, sitting with my little sister and my dad, yelling for her as she walked across the stage."

Rikki would follow in her mother's footsteps, graduating in 1996 with a bachelor of arts degree in English and a minor in German.

"I had three professors who really taught me how to write – Dr. Dale Simpson, Dr. Henry Harder and Dr. Henry (Bud) Morgan," she says.

Today, she works as an account manager for business development for Freeman Health System.

"I still use the things they taught me in my work today," she says.

Before working for Freeman, Rikki was working for the service learning program at Missouri Southern in 2011. Following the May 22 tornado, she brought her young daughter Emma with her to work due to a lack of childcare options in Joplin.

"I would come use the computers and email my friends to see if they were OK," says Emma, who also volunteered at the Red Cross shelter on campus to help sort toiletries and other donations.

"I could triple major here rather than just being a general business major at another school," she says.

Emma, who has served as the public relations chair for the Omicron Delta Kappa honor society and worked in the University Relations & Marketing office as a student, says she has enjoyed her time as a fourth-generation Lion.

"I really like the atmosphere here ... across the departments, you can always find a friendly face," she says. "I can't sing the praises higher for the people I've been taught by and worked with."

When she graduates in December, her mother and grandmother will be there to cheer her on.

"For it to go from my grandfather to my daughter, it's such a good tie to this place," says Rikki. "It's special."

Elaine agrees, saying it's unique to have yet another generation graduate from Missouri Southern. Emma playfully teases her grandmother for her matter-of-fact take.

"Grandma will cry when I graduate," Emma says. "She cries at everything."

When it came time to decide where she was going to go to college, Emma says Missouri Southern made the most sense.





*'It puts me back,
in the past'*

**Senior Jedediah Buck compiles history of Carthage family
for digital collection**

They were total strangers; faces from long ago staring back at him from decades-old family photos.

But as the summer progressed, Jedediah Buck began feeling a connection to the Bailey family as he sorted and catalogued items for the Special Collections in the Spiva Library Archives, where he is a student worker.

Buck, a senior history major, said he spent more than 140 hours putting the collection together.

"They all started out as strangers, but I began to see the same people showing up again and again, and I began making a map of the family," he said.

The Bailey Collection documents the lives of a Carthage family and their lives prior to and following World War II. When Mabel Sellars Bailey died without any heirs, the family photos, letters and documents were donated to the library in 1986.

Following World War I, Edward Bailey married Mabel Sellars in 1919. Their son, Carroll, was born in 1927.

Edward served as a colonel during WWII and he and Mabel settled in China in the 1940s to assist with post-war construction. They were evacuated in 1947 due to the rise of the Chinese Communist Party. Settling back in Carthage, Edward wrote letters to government officials in Washington, D.C., warning them about the dangers of communist China.



Carroll was drafted by the Army in 1945 and later was stationed in Japan. There he met Koda Emiko (Amy Eileen Koda Bailey), and they were married in 1957 before he was called back to the U.S. They lived for a time on the base at Fort Bragg before moving back to Carthage.

A professional violinist, not much is known about Amy's life in Carthage, but at some point she moved to North Carolina, where she passed away in 2015. No mention of her was made in Carroll's obituary when he died in 1979.

As he began piecing together the digital collection, Buck said he became invested in the family's story. On Memorial Day, he visited Mount Hope Cemetery in Webb City and was able to track down the gravestones for Edward, Mabel and Carroll, where he left flowers.

"They grew on me, and it hurt my feelings that there was no one – not even distant family relatives – who could have inherited (this collection)," he said.

Buck, who will graduate from MSSU next May, said the experience of assembling the Bailey Collection helped

solidify his interest in continuing his education to get his master's degree in archival and library sciences.

"As a history major, it puts me back in the past," he said. "You see patterns and can put them together so others can see. It's really fulfilling."

The collection can be viewed online through Spiva Library's Archives and Special Collections page at www.mssu.edu.



Hard-Hitting LESSONS

UPD chief teaching his 50th Rape Aggression Defense class

Laughter is peppered with shouts of "NO!" and swift kicks to the groin in Kinesiology 0101, more commonly known as Women's Self Defense.

Their laughter doesn't mean University Police Chief Ken Kennedy doesn't hold their attention. He's taught women's self-defense using the Rape Aggression Defense (RAD) program since 2005, with this semester marking his 50th class. He is well-versed in keeping the atmosphere light while using repetition to commit the defense movements to memory.

According to the World Health Organization, 1 in 3 women have experienced physical or sexual violence at least once in their lifetime. RAD training provides students not only basic self-defense skills in the event they become one of those women, but the knowledge needed to help make the decision to resist or not in those situations.

"I really like the class. I think it helps with confidence," said freshman Julia Dennis, who is taking the class this fall. "And my mom really wanted me to take it since I'm away from home."

They might be laughing one moment, while the next sees them making eye contact with their "attacker" (who is wearing a police uniform and holding a thick protective pad), saying a loud, firm "NO!" and taking Kennedy's advice to keep their toe pointed when their shoelaces make contact with the groin during their snap kick.

However, the RAD program isn't all blocks, punches and kicks. The first half of the semester – along with practicing basic self-defense skills – there's a lecture component with class discussion. Students learn about their various options in confrontation, and how and why to make the decision to resist. Eventually they build on the basic skills to expand their options should those basic tactics fail.

In their reflection papers, Kennedy's students share the impact the class has had:



"I've already found comfort and confidence within the first week of the Women's Self Defense class," reads one.

"Women's Self Defense class has been enjoyable, therapeutic and educational and has become a part of my day that I genuinely look forward to, and not just because I get to punch things," offers another.

Year after year, his students tell him how much they enjoy his class, and about the empowerment and personal growth they gain from it, as well as the bonds made.

"They develop lifelong friendships here. When you're punching each other twice a week all of class time, a close bond develops," he said. "Ten years down the road they're still talking, still friends. This is the best part of my day. I really enjoy it."

A World of Opportunity

Senior Addie Siebenthal embraces a global classroom as she looks toward the future



It's like a scene straight out of an action movie, but with an unexpected twist.

Addie Siebenthal, a senior at Missouri Southern, steps out of the Airbnb home where she has been staying in Yerevan, the capital of Armenia. She knows the risks, but she's hungry and wants to grab a bite to eat from a nearby restaurant.

As she reaches the corner, the driver of a passing car spies her and swerves in her direction.

The vehicle stops directly in her path, the occupants leaning out of the car.

And then, as she fears, they blast her with water and drive away.

It's Vardavar, a water festival that began as a pagan tradition that is now celebrated as a national holiday. People gather at a fountain in the center of the city to splash water on one another, but in reality, one isn't safe anywhere.

"You have to be careful because there will be people pouring water on you from the balcony, and men with huge water guns who will shoot at people on the sidewalks," Siebenthal says. "Everyone is out having fun together. There was a guy with a bucket of water who tried to chase me down, but I got inside before he could throw it at me."

She spent several weeks in Armenia this summer to work on a special project that examines the country's history, conflicts, religion and culture, and it's one that's right in her wheelhouse.

Siebenthal, an international studies/political science major, has embraced a number of opportunities at

Missouri Southern to study abroad and participate in internships that have kept her focused on her goal of becoming a foreign service officer.

"I really enjoy foreign affairs," she says. "Reading about them in my free time has been a little hobby. I enjoy getting to know other cultures and analyzing the political field to the best of my ability."

"It's really crucial to experience another culture. There's a lot more to the world than our tiny region."

Austria and Germany

Even before graduating from Joplin High School, Siebenthal says she knew she wanted to attend Missouri Southern.

It helped that she was already well acquainted with the campus. Her mother, Dr. Christine Bentley, is a faculty member in the Art Department and currently serves as director of the Spiva Gallery.

"I had always viewed Missouri Southern as a place where I could get to know my professors better, and I knew they had a great study abroad program," she says.

During the second semester of her freshman year, she took the opportunity to study in Austria at the University of Salzburg.

"It's a smaller city, and I was surprised how easy it was to get around and how friendly everyone was," she says. "It pushed me to want to continue to study abroad in different regions of the world."

Her second experience abroad came as a “random opportunity.”

“I had a former teacher at Joplin High School who messaged me one day,” she says. “They had a current exchange student whose family in Germany was looking for a live-in nanny.”

She spent the next year in Karlsruhe, Germany, caring for the family’s two children, ages 5 and 7, and continuing her studies online at MSSU.

“I only worked 30 hours a week, so I got to know the country on a more personal level,” she says.

Thailand and Morocco

During the first semester of her junior year, Siebenthal traveled to Bangkok, Thailand, to study at Thammasat University.

“Everyone was so friendly there. Up until that point, I had always imagined going off to grad school to study Middle Eastern and African affairs,” she says. “But my experience in Thailand pushed me to want to possibly study Southeast Asian affairs.”

The following semester was spent studying at Al Akhawayn University in Ifrane, Morocco, but the experience was cut short by the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic, however.

“We were on our spring break, and a lot of the exchange students were in Europe because flights were really cheap,” she says. “I had gone to Poland with a friend when a lot of countries began to talk about going into lockdown. The airport was completely crowded, but I was able to get on the last flight out of the country.”

Internships

During the Spring 2020 semester, she and another student did an internship with Dr. Nicole Shoaf, associate professor of political science at Missouri Southern. Together, they contacted Republican and Democrat state parties to see if they had drafted their agendas for the year.

Their work was part of an ongoing research project to assess what issues remain relevant and important to the state parties, and those that are no longer seen as relevant.

In December 2020, she was accepted into an internship program with the U.S. State Department.

“I started out in a small group where we were vetting articles about a machine learning algorithm, and how it could be useful within the State Department,” she says. “It could be used in embassies around the world to help with national security and help better vet people going through the visa process.”

“It was structured like a bureaucracy. We started in small teams, and slowly added more people ... students from around the U.S. None of us had been researching the same topic. It was very interesting.”

Getting to know Armenia

The weeks spent in Armenia – from early June until July 21 – came after the university accepted her McCaleb Initiative for Peace proposal.

Established through funding by Kenneth and Margaret McCaleb, the grants fund projects that examine the causes and consequences of war, as well as peacekeeping efforts. She will document her research this fall in a series of 12 articles written for The Chart, the campus newspaper.

“Each of them will focus on various topics, such as the history of the country, the Armenian genocide,

Armenia during the Soviet area, and Christianity in Armenia ... it’s seen as one of the first Christian nations and a lot of people believe Mount Ararat is where Noah’s ark landed,” she says. “They had a recent war in their country, so that will be highlighted, as well as other sections on their culture and who they are as a people.”

Siebenthal says that of all her overseas travels, her time in Armenia proved to be one of her best experiences.

“I met a few Armenians who were shocked when I told them what I was doing. They didn’t think anyone knew or cared about their country. They’ve gone through a lot. Their history is rich but filled with a lot of sorrow and loss. But they’ve grown through tragedy and it’s the friendliest country I’ve been to.”

‘Driven, but strategic’

Siebenthal’s experiences in the last few years have been “reassuring” when it comes to her goal of becoming a foreign service officer – serving as a U.S. diplomat abroad.

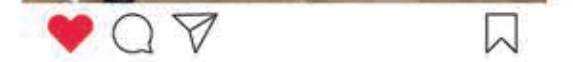
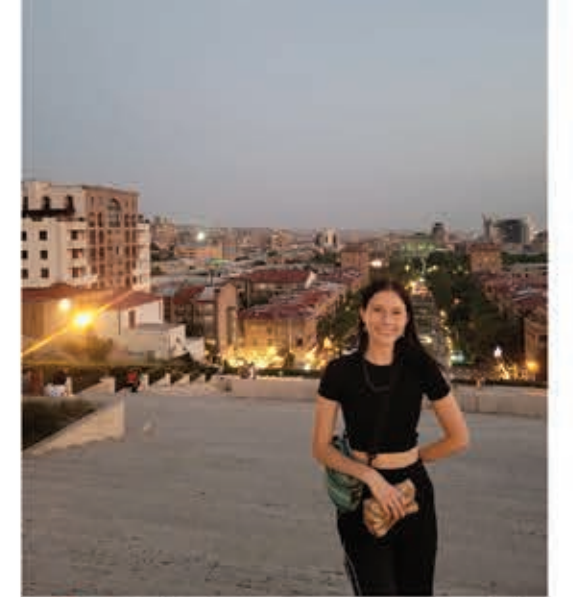
“It helped shape what I want to do and the region where I’d like to be stationed,” she says. “I’ve always been driven, but strategic. Even now, I’m looking at deadlines for different internships and fellowships ... I never want to let something pass me by.”

“Missouri Southern is a great university, especially when it comes to opportunities to study abroad,” she says. “It’s affordable and can change your life’s path. It can reset your priorities as far as what you truly want to pursue, and allow you to become more open-minded and well-informed.”

Shoaf, who has served as Siebenthal’s academic adviser, says her student’s focus and commitment both in and out of the classroom is laudable.

“You see students who have an inkling of (their career aspirations). Addie is confident in what she wants to do,” Shoaf says. “She’s not only sure of herself, but she’s put in the effort to make it happen now, and that’s rare.”

“Studying abroad and doing internships when they’re not required, that takes extra effort beyond regular coursework. She has seen the value in those things and it will make all the difference. Her resume when she graduates is going to be a thing of beauty.”





MISSOURI SOUTHERN ALUMNI AND FRIENDS

MAKING CONNECTIONS



It was a celebration of “Decades of Southern Spirit” during this fall’s Homecoming festivities – from the dapper dress of the early days of Joplin Junior College to ‘70s disco, the ‘90s grunge era and beyond.

Gawaka Burks, a junior business management major from St. Louis, and Jessica Lord, a sophomore financial accounting major from Wagoner, Okla., were crowned Homecoming King and Queen. Both were sponsored by the Campus Activities Board.

In addition to themed Spirit Days and departmental contests, a major highlight of the week was the Homecoming parade. This year, the event was moved to downtown Joplin, and saw streets packed with people celebrating Lion pride as they cheered on the floats, marching bands and other entries.

During the week’s festivities, the Alumni Association also recognized the Distinguished Alum, Outstanding Alum and Outstanding Family recipients for 2020 and 2021.

He currently serves as a mediator in more than 200 cases per year. He received the Spurgeon Smithson Award from the Missouri Bar Foundation in 2005 “for significant contributions to the administration of justice.”

2021 OUTSTANDING ALUM NATHAN BEMO, '98

Nathan Bemo graduated from MSSU in 1998 with a bachelor’s degree in general business.

Later that year he began American Ramp Company (ARC), which specializes in designing and building skateparks. Since its inception, ARC has built more than 4,000 projects in 45 countries.



Seeing the huge need for storm shelters after the Joplin tornado hit, Bemo and his partners started Atlas Safe Rooms. They have built more than 4,300 storm shelters in 28 states, including some international projects.

2021 OUTSTANDING FAMILY



2021 DISTINGUISHED ALUM RON MITCHELL, '71

Ron Mitchell graduated from Missouri Southern in 1971. From 1974 to 2016, he was with the Joplin firm Blanchard, Robertson, Mitchell & Carter, where he tried more than 200 jury trials.

THE CHAD, '96 AND JENNIFER, '97 WAGONER FAMILY

Dr. Chad and Jennifer

Wagoner are both graduates of Missouri Southern.

Since 2006, Chad has been a family medicine physician with Mercy Hospital, practicing in Carthage. He's the president of the Joplin area alumni association of the Kappa Alpha Order.

Jennifer graduated from Missouri Southern in 1997 with a bachelor's of science degree in education-secondary mathematics and chemistry. She is a teacher at Carthage High School.

Their daughter, Eryn, is currently a sophomore at MSSU majoring in biology and physics.

**2020 DISTINGUISHED ALUM
ANDY THOMAS, '80**

Andy Thomas received his degree in marketing/management from Missouri Southern in 1980. He began his professional art career in the fall of 1991 after 16 years with Leggett & Platt Inc. He works from his studio – named Maze Creek – in Carthage, Mo., to create unique oil paintings that tell a story.

He's known for his action-filled Western art and has published two books, "The Artful Journey" and "The West in Action." Thomas' work has won

numerous awards and throughout his career he has been part of many shows from coast to coast.

**2020 OUTSTANDING ALUM
NOPPADOL PAOTHONG, '02**

Noppadol Paothong, a 2002 graduate of MSSU, is a nature/conservation photographer who has focused on documenting rare and endangered species.

A native of Thailand, he graduated with a communications degree, and served as a staff photographer for the Joplin Globe and later the Springfield News-Leader. Since 2006, he has been a staff wildlife photographer with the Missouri Department of Conservation.

In 2012, he published "Save the Last Dance," capturing stunning images of the endangered grouse. He followed that up in 2018 with a second book, "Sage Grouse: Icon of the West." He is a member of the International League of Conservation Photographers, which accepts the world's most elite wildlife, nature and culture photographers.

**2020 OUTSTANDING FAMILY
THE DAVID AND LAURA WEAVER FAMILY, '89**

David and Laura Weaver both graduated from Missouri Southern in 1989; David with a bachelor's in general business and an associate's degree in accounting, and Laura with a degree in elementary education/language arts.

David is in charge of Missouri Southern's Koinonia Christian Campus Ministry. He has also owned Weaver Photography in Joplin for more than 20 years. Laura recently became the Special Services Director for the Diamond R-IV School

District. She has held positions with College Heights Christian School, Carthage, Seneca and Joplin school districts.

They have four children: Michael, Rachel, Brandon and Joshua.

Michael is a 2014 biology/pre-professional graduate of Missouri Southern and is currently studying medicine through KCU. Rachel (Weaver) Johnson received her degree in elementary education from MSSU in 2016 and is a first-grade teacher at Columbian Elementary in Carthage.

Brandon graduated from MSSU in 2012 with a CIS degree and a general business minor. He is a senior software

engineer-developer for the Square Developers team. Their youngest son, Joshua, is currently in the eighth grade.





COLLEGE OF ARTS & SCIENCES

EXOTIC ANIMAL DISPLAYS CONTRIBUTE TO 'REYNOLDS REWILDING'

Dr. David Penning calls the project "The Reynolds Rewilding."

"Historically, we've had live animals on display in the building, but not in recent years," he said.

Penning has been working with his students to create a series of animal displays on the second floor of Reynolds. Those stopping to take a look may find some exotic species they didn't know existed.

"There are 13 different cages, ranging from an American mata mata turtle, which has a weird, ornate design; African bullfrogs; stinkpot turtles from Kellogg Lake in Carthage; a chameleon; and a frilled dragon.

"There's also an amphiuma – a three-foot-long salamander – named Hot Dog, which we collected during a student trip to Louisiana over the summer. He's about as big around as a kielbasa but smaller than a summer sausage."

Other unusual species on display include an axolotl (which Penning says is perhaps most famous for providing cute pictures on Instagram), which can regenerate limbs if needed; and a pipa pipa, a frog that gives birth by ejecting its young through openings on its back.

Penning's students have helped create the displays and assist with their feeding and care.

When she makes her rounds, sophomore biology/pre-veterinary major Hannah Snyder generally works with Ralph, a blue-tongued skink, and Neo and Lucky – a pair of hearty turtles who sustained and recovered from shell injuries.

"I started out terrified of snakes and anything with scales ... really, anything without fur," she said. "Now I can handle most of the animals alone.

"There's very little work with exotic animals or pocket pets in veterinary school. I shadowed more than 100 hours at a vet clinic and saw one guinea pig and no reptiles. If someone were to bring one in, I will know how to handle it, see its behavior and understand how I can help them."

From a public education standpoint, people will be able to walk through Reynolds and learn about animals they might not be aware existed, said Penning. Each animal will have a "Tinder-like profile" highlighting their characteristics.

"The other side of it is students will get a zoological experience while here," he said. "They can learn about the animals' diets, test water quality, and monitor their health. If you look at what it takes to get into veterinary school, or get jobs at zoos or aquariums, they want applicants to have hands-on experience. Students very rarely have the chance to get training while working with exotic animals."



INUIT ART COLLECTION DONATED TO ART DEPARTMENT

A collection of Inuit carvings has been donated to the Department of Art and Design by the family of a former faculty member.

Dr. Mel Mosher, a professor emeritus in the Chemistry Department who died in 2010, collected the soapstone carvings along with his wife, Donna, who passed away earlier this year.

"It was probably the late '60s or early '70s when they started collecting," said their son Michael Mosher, a Colorado resident who delivered the pieces to the Art Department. "Our mother was from Canada ... both of our parents were from the Pacific Northwest, and they really enjoyed this kind of art.

"They would find and purchase them and for long as I can remember, we had pieces in the house."

The collection of nearly 20 pieces were created by contemporary Inuit artists. Some depict seals, birds, a walrus and other animals, and were created by artists from Canada's northwest territories.

"My favorite piece is the Inuit with a seal," Mosher said. "The artists were carving things they would see every day. Some are comical and others are much more serious."

The works donated to MSSU also include two ebony heads carved by Nigerian artists. Those two pieces will be included in the department's permanent study collection of African art and artifacts.

SCRIPT COLLECTION SHARED WITH THEATRE DEPARTMENT

A donation of around 200 hardbound scripts will further expand research and performance opportunities in the Theatre Department.

The collection was donated by Dr. Jim Lile, a professor of theatre.

"I used to belong to what was the theater equivalent of a book-of-the-month club," said Lile. "It was called Fireside Theatre. You'd join and they'd send you scripts.

"It was marvelous because oftentimes they'd send you a copy within weeks of a show opening in New York City. Some months it would be a new play, other times it would be a classic or a new translation of a work. I was a member for years."

He and his wife – Ann Lile, herself a former member of the faculty – were recently downsizing and decided to donate the collection of roughly 200 plays to the department.

"There are a lot of American and British plays, as well as anthologies," he said. "We figured it would be good for them to get a second life where students might be able to use them."

Erick Wolfe, department chair, said the collection represents a major expansion to the collected works that students already have access to in a small study room in the Fine Arts Building.

"It will give our students more access to plays when they're doing research, or doing one-acts or scene work," Wolfe said. "They can be used by students taking directing, acting or design classes, or doing improv work or fight choreography.

"We're also about to start a dramaturgy class, so students will be selecting plays and doing research on the author and production."



ROBERT W. PLASTER COLLEGE OF BUSINESS

Andrews (Worst Case/Best Case Scenario)					
Survey	1,250	1,668	471		
Forecast	0.9	0.9	0.9	0.9	0.9
Worst Case	1127	1501	424	344	352
Inventory	18		40	78	62
Forecast	936	14			290
Production					
Forecast *1.2)	1,123	1,755			48
	Able	Acre	Ad		



STUDENTS EXCEL IN CAPSIM BUSINESS SIMULATION

Capstone course combines the study and practice of business

Business students in Missouri Southern’s Strategic Management course learn from hands-on experience using the Capsim business simulation.

Strategic Management, a capstone course taken during the last semester of university work, integrates business disciplines with formal analyses of the organization’s macro and industry environment; mission and goals; and strategy formulation, implementation, and control using computer simulation and/or the case method approach.

“Having taught Strategic Management for over 35 years, one of my goals has always been to help students integrate the study of business and the practice of business,” said Dr. Robert Hilton, assistant professor of management.

“At MSSU, our graduating seniors have the opportunity to integrate the major business functions of marketing, research and development, production and finance, as well as other areas and functions including human resources, labor negotiations, ethics and total quality.”

The Capsim business simulation assesses student decisions through four practice and eight competition rounds of play. The balanced scorecard is used to assess the four pillars of business, finance, internal business systems, customer metrics, and learning and growth.

Based on the objectives of the course, Capsim industries are organized in either team or individual formats. Team formats help to build skills in team formation and execution, including peer trust, decision-making and analysis.

Five of the 18 student teams from MSSU’s 2021 spring semester scored in Capsim’s top 10 percent Overall Balanced Scorecard, with one team placing in the top 1 percent internationally. The overall ranking included more than 2,700 eligible teams from around the world.

“Based on my experiences, I have found business simulations help seniors better prepare for their next step in life, graduate studies or employment,” said Hilton. “I am so proud of all our students. It is an honor and a pleasure to be a part our future alums’ capstone experience.”

COLLEGE OF BUSINESS TAKES STEP TOWARD AACSB ACCREDITATION

The Plaster College of Business has taken another step toward achieving accreditation from the Association to Advance Collegiate Schools of Business.

The global nonprofit association, established in 1916, connects educators, students and businesses with a mission of improving the quality of business education around the world.

The organization’s International Initial Accreditation Committee met last spring to review the initial self-evaluation report submitted by the College of Business, and recently notified the university that the report had been accepted.

“The faculty, students, administration and other stakeholders of Missouri Southern State University are to be congratulated on their efforts,” the notification stated. “The Initial Accreditation Committee commends the progress your school has made toward earning AACSB International business accreditation and looks forward to working with your school in achieving its goals.”

The goal is for the College of Business to be fully aligned with the accreditation standards when the second progress report is due in February 2023.

STUDENTS PARTICIPATE IN REGIONAL INNOVATION & TECHNOLOGY SUMMIT

Students from the College of Business were invited to participate in the inaugural Joplin Regional Innovation & Technology Summit.

Presented by the Joplin Area Chamber of Commerce, the event – held on Nov. 5 – focused on issues such as cyber security, e-commerce and entrepreneurship in a series of breakout sessions.

As part of the entrepreneurship track, a pitch competition was offered at the high-school and collegiate level with \$1,000 offered for first place and \$500 for second. Dr. Dominic Buccieri, assistant professor of international business, and Ken Surbrugg, director of the Center for Entrepreneurship volunteered to help organize the pitch contest.

Due the variety of topics and breakout sessions offered, the event had wide appeal for business and non-business majors.

“The event is a really great opportunity for our students,”

said Buccieri. “Cyber security is a growing issue, and this is an opportunity for our CIS and human resources majors to learn more about it. The e-commerce session includes a focus on women in technology.”

Other sessions covered topics such as digital marketing, start-up space, and digital workforce coding.

A discounted rate was offered for students to participate, and Buccieri said he hopes the summit will become an annual event.





COLLEGE OF EDUCATION

'HE KNEW THE TRUE VALUE OF EDUCATION'

Display honors education building's namesake

A new display case in Taylor Hall celebrates the building's namesake and pays tribute to the late congressman's impact on higher education. The display includes photos and personal mementos that were provided to Missouri Southern by the family of Gene Taylor.

Born in 1928 in Sarcoxie, he taught for three years at a country school in Jasper County. He was one of the original members of the Jasper County Junior College Board of Trustees, which was instrumental in establishing Missouri Southern State College.

He began his political career in 1954 as the mayor of Sarcoxie, and later became chairman of the Jasper County Republican Committee. In 1972, he was elected to the U.S. House of Representatives, where he served six terms. He passed away in 1998.

The education building, which was opened in 1977, was named in his honor.

In creating the display, MSSU's Community Historian Brad Belk said it was important to memorialize the accomplishments of one of the university's founding fathers.

"Gene left an indelible mark in higher education," said Belk. "He knew the true value of education and the employment opportunities that would follow."

"We are thankful to his daughter Linda Cobine, a 1973 graduate of Missouri Southern, for the donation of the artifacts and for starting the Congressman Gene Taylor Scholarship."



MEGAN BAKER, '08, HONORED AS PE TEACHER OF THE YEAR



Megan Baker, a 2008 graduate of the Teacher Education program, was recently announced as Physical Education Teacher of the Year for the West Central District by MOSHAPE.

The statewide program supports, encourages and provides assistance to educators in grades K-12 to promote health, leisure and movement-related activities.

A middle-school physical education teacher in Belton, Mo., Baker said she enjoys helping her students learn about wellness activities that can last a lifetime. During the pandemic, she embraced technology in order to make sure kids could stay active at home.

"Another colleague and I created a YouTube channel (SpakerSpot) to offer different activities they could do at home," she said. "We wanted to show innovative and creative things students and parents could do, using things they could find at home."

Their videos included lessons on how to turn paper plates into frisbees and toilet paper bowling, as well as tips for other PE teachers on how to safely reintroduce students to in-person learning. The videos were also spotlighted on the Missouri Healthy Schools' YouTube channel.

"It was challenging, but the desire to fill a need is what drove us," Baker said. "We pushed ourselves to go above and beyond to make it happen. I think just seeing a familiar face was important for our students. It gave them a sense of comfort, belonging and community they needed during that time."

Baker and the other award recipients were honored during the 2021 MOSHAPE Convention in November.

CULLERS RECEIVES GRANT TO HELP RESEARCH FOOD INSECURITY

As the director of Missouri Southern's Lion Co-op food pantry, Dr. Andrea Cullers sees firsthand the need for supplemental nutrition in college students.

"We're seeing chronic food insecurity where every week or month students are needing assistance. There's very little research involving food insecurity in college students," said Cullers, an associate professor of kinesiology. "We wanted to look into how to best connect them with benefits they may not know about."

As a member of the Missouri Council for Activity and Nutrition Food Systems work group, Cullers collaborated with other members to earn a nearly \$25,000 grant to fund research into food insecurity. The \$24,695 Fahs-Beck Foundation grant will help fund their research in food insecurity in Missouri college students, as well as their access to and knowledge of the USDA's Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP).

SNAP is the largest federal nutrition assistance program and provides benefits to eligible low-income individuals and families at grocery stores and farmers markets. Eighteen percent of MSSU students are eligible for SNAP, while nationally less than 1 percent who are eligible access those benefits.

"Malnutrition isn't just not enough calories, it's inadequate nutrition. Someone can be getting plenty of calories, but if they're not nutritious calories they can be malnourished. SNAP can help with that," said Cullers. "We can't perform at our full potential at school or in our life if we're hungry or not getting the nutrition that we need."





COLLEGE OF HEALTH SCIENCES



'WE'RE IN HIGH DEMAND'

No shortage of available jobs for students majoring in respiratory care

Kaleigh Kittrell discovered early on what her field of study would be.

"I had a family friend who worked in respiratory care," Kittrell said. "I job-shadowed with her and found that it was my passion."

A senior in the Respiratory Care program at Missouri Southern, she's already working for Integris Health in Miami, Okla.

"I'm helping out with basic respiratory care duties and helping with critical patients ... most of them with COVID," she said. "We're in high demand right now."

Kittrell isn't alone when it comes to having already landed a job in her field. With the pandemic numbers still high, there is an increasing demand for students who are ready to put their classroom training to work.

"At this point, the entire class of 10 is employed," said Dr. Sherry Whiteman, chair of the Respiratory Care Department. "If we had a full cohort (of 24), I know they'd all already have jobs. (Pre-COVID), it might have only one or two who had positions about now."

In addition to Mercy and Freeman hospitals in Joplin, students are working for hospitals in Miami, Grove and Tulsa, Okla. Whiteman said she's had inquiries about the availability of students from Springfield, Mo., as well.

While students may not be able to perform ventilations and other advanced care techniques yet, Whiteman said being on the job allows them to get exposure to advanced concepts earlier than they normally would in the classroom.

"The hospitals know our students are well trained, and that they can send them out to do the work," she said.

HEALTHCARE ADMINISTRATION STUDENTS GET HANDS-ON EXPERIENCE

According to the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, employment in the medical and health services managers field is expected to grow by 32 percent by 2030 – a rate much faster than all other occupations.

That's good news for students studying for the bachelor of science in healthcare administration degree at Missouri Southern, says Melinda Brown, director of the Gipson Center for Healthcare Leadership.

"This is a degree unique to this area, and it's one of the top 10 highest-paying jobs in healthcare," she says. "Our upper-level classes are taught by healthcare professionals. The things students are earning are real life ... not just out of a book."

One of the requirements for the degree is an eight-week internship with a healthcare provider. It's an experience that can prove invaluable for students as they seek employment in the field.

"I tell all of (the internship sites) that I don't want our students filing papers," says Brown. "I want them to be getting hands-on experience."

That was the case for Mikayla Hutchinson, who graduated in May with a degree in healthcare administration and minors in general business and management. She is now employed as a sales representative with Legend Senior Living in Wichita, Kan.

While still a student, she did an internship with Legend Senior Living. A few months before graduation, she applied and got the sales position when it opened. She works with the facility's sales director, giving tours and doing outreach as well as helping with events.

"I want to eventually serve in a management role," Hutchinson said. "This job will help because it lets me see all parts of the business."

GIFT TO ESTABLISH VR SIMULATION LAB FOR NURSING PROGRAM

A substantial gift from an anonymous donor will help transform the Nursing Department at MSSU through innovative technology designed to enhance the student learning experience.

The funds will be used to purchase the equipment needed to create a healthcare virtual reality simulation lab.

"It will allow our students to have a safe environment to begin practicing skills and enhancing their learning before entering the clinical setting," said Dr. Lisa Beals, chair of the Nursing Department.

"Students will be in a virtual environment where they can experience scenarios for patients in distress. With the VR goggles and hand controllers, they can work through the scenario by assessing the patient, using the equipment, dealing with conflict management and talking to patients and families."

For instance, nursing students might find themselves at the bedside of a patient experiencing respiratory distress. The VR scenario would require them to facilitate patient care by choosing the correct equipment and going through the steps necessary to apply oxygen.

A room in the Health Sciences Center has already been identified to house the VR lab, with the goal to have everything in place for student use by the start of the Fall 2022 semester.



LION ATHLETICS



One...two...three... Go Lions!

A MATTER OF COURSE

SOUTHERN'S TOM RUTLEDGE CROSS COUNTRY COURSE A HUGE PLUS FOR STUDENT-ATHLETES, REGION

"If you build it, they will come."

It's a famous quote from the baseball-themed "Field of Dreams," but it holds true when talking about the Tom Rutledge Cross Country Course on the campus of Missouri Southern.

The championship-caliber course is host to one of the biggest cross-country meets in the Midwest and home to one of the most talented distance programs in college

athletics. The impact of the course, highlighted by the annual Southern Stampede, is not limited to Missouri Southern but also the city, local businesses and region as a whole.

The cross-country course has been the home to 10 NCAA Division II Cross Country Regional Championship meets (including 2021), while being slated to host that race for the next four years. It has also been host to four NCAA Division II National Championship races and will do so again in 2023.

'AN ICONIC EVENT'

Southern Stampede didn't start off as a huge meet with a regional impact, however.

It initially began with just a few schools and less than 50 runners. Over the years, the event has morphed into one that attracts some of the nation's top programs and routinely sees more than 2,000 runners compete on the third Saturday in September in both collegiate and high-school races.



Run your heart out!

Jamie Burnham, head distance coach at Missouri Southern, has been part of the program for more than 30 years and has helped mentor some of the most talented distance runners in the NCAA. During his tenure, he has helped coach numerous All-MIAA, All-Region and

All-American athletes, as well as national champions.

Burnham will go into the MSSU Athletics Hall of Fame this year, but he said the recognition is a tribute to the privilege of getting to run on such a great course and hosting such an iconic event.

"It's been a great advantage to have our own cross-country course on campus," he said. "To have this area to train on and be able to have major competitions on is a great thing not only for the university and our program but also for the Joplin community."

A VISION BECOMES REALITY

The economic impact to the Joplin community and region can't be overstated.

Every year, Southern Stampede alone brings more than 2,000 athletes, hundreds of coaches and staff, as well as thousands of fans to the Joplin area. When you add in thousands more who will come for the NCAA Regional and National Championships, the program stands to bring more than 60,000 people to the area over the next five years. These are people who will eat at the local restaurants, shop in stores, stay in hotels and purchase gas.

All of this comes down to the vision of former Lions track and field head coach and MSSU Hall of Famer Tom Rutledge.

"In 1990, (then president) Dr. Julio León gave us permission to use 40 acres around the stadium to excavate and develop a course," Rutledge said. "The starting line was where the North End Zone Facility parking lot is now and we finished in the stadium. Eventually, we added another 50 acres and we moved the finish line after the NEZ was built."

The name 'Southern Stampede' came from his wife, Karen, and according to Rutledge, the event owes much to the former coach at the University of Arkansas – the late John McDonnell – for bringing his team to Joplin and attracting other colleges to do the same.

"It has been a great advantage for our student-athletes to have this in their own back yard for practice and not to have to travel to another event," he said. "It's also an excellent recruiting tool to host high-school meets. I can see the ripple effect of local cross-country and track-and-field programs and the next generation of athletes choosing to be runners."



High five!

'I FEEL BLESSED'

ZACH PARISH FINDS CALLING AFTER RECORD-SETTING CAREER AT MSSU

Former Missouri Southern standout pitcher Zach Parish finished his career with the Green and Gold this past spring and went down as one of the greatest pitchers in not only MSSU history, but in all of NCAA Division II.

The Tahlequah, Okla., native was the MIAA Pitcher of the Year, the National Collegiate Baseball Writers

Association Region and National Pitcher of the Year, the American Baseball Coaches Association Regional and National Pitcher of the Year, as well as the D2 Conference

Commissioner's Association Regional and National Pitcher of the Year. He was also a first-team All-MIAA, All-Region and All-American selection by each organization.

Parish became the NCAA Division II all-time leader in strikeouts, ending his career with 488 strikeouts. Parish tied his own MSSU single-season strikeout record with 136 in 2021. He also finished the season with the best single-season ERA for a starter in MSSU history (1.21) and the second-best career ERA for a starter (2.16).

But those accolades may have been all for naught, had it not been for his hard work when he transferred from Northeastern State University in 2017. Parish was the MIAA Freshman of the Year in 2016 but wanted a change of scenery.

"My experience at Southern was an absolute blast," Parish said. "I wouldn't have wanted to go anywhere else to finish out my career. I needed a change in life and my grades weren't the best at NSU. But the administration at Missouri Southern – and Amanda Schmelzer in particular – took on the challenge of helping me get that degree."

"Zach had an exceptional career on the field because he did the work in the classroom," said Director of Compliance Amanda Schmelzer. "I know that much has been said about his work ethic on the field, but he had that same drive and determination when it came to the classroom. I was at the park on numerous occasions watching him break records, but the greatest joy I had was watching him walk across the stage to get his diploma."

Parish went on to participate in the Major League Baseball Draft League where he and current Lion Logan VanWey were teammates with the Trenton Thunder. Parish saw action in two games with two starts and went seven and two thirds of an inning,

striking out eight batters and holding hitters to a .042 batting average.

"The MLB draft league in New Jersey was awesome," he said. "It was even better going with teammates. I was getting to play against some of the top guys in the country/world and it was incredible."

Parish went undrafted, but later signed a free-agent deal with the Texas Rangers. He was slated to report to the Rangers' facility in Arizona before changing his mind and deciding to pursue a different path.

"I wasn't really expecting it but I got a call and I think I ultimately rushed my decision," he said. "I just didn't have the heart for the game that I had in the past."

In September, Parish announced he had decided to turn to coaching and would be directing the 11 and under American Marucci team, a youth travel baseball team.

"I started working a full-time job and am also in the coaching world," he said. "(Coaching) is something I have dreamed of doing, and being able to live it out is an incredible honor. I feel blessed to be able to give back my knowledge for the game and help these younger kids grow not only as an athlete, but as a better person."

While setting records at MSSU, he also met his fiancé. Parish proposed to former Lion volleyball player Addison Berry in December of 2020.

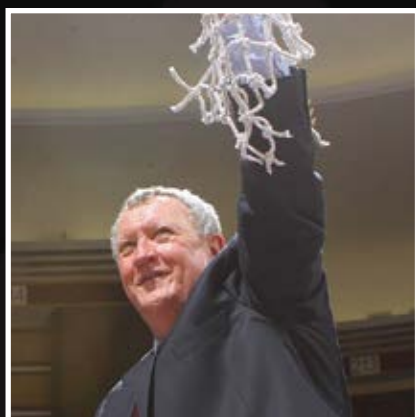
"I've heard you meet your soulmate in college, and funny enough, (I did)," he said. "She is a wonderful woman who backs me up daily. She pushes me to become a better man."

"Looking back at Southern, I think one word comes to mind and that is 'family.' I am so thankful for my time at MSSU and through the ups and downs of everything – baseball or school stuff – the guys, coaches, the administration, they are the reason I will remember MSSU. I will definitely be back to live life as an alum."



CORN, GIVENS STEDDUM INDUCTED INTO MIAA HALL OF FAME

Robert Corn and Tongula Givens Steddum were inducted into the MIAA Hall of Fame's Class of 2021 in June.



As a basketball player, **CORN** was a tenacious defender who provided the leadership that enabled Missouri Southern to reach the quarterfinals of the NAIA Basketball Championships in 1978. Co-captain of the 1977-78 team, he helped the Lions finish

27-9 and capture both the CSIC and NAIA District 16 championships.

But his performance as a player pales in respect to all that he accomplished as coach of the Lions. Corn retired in 2014 following 25 years as the head coach at his alma mater, including a 1999-00 season that saw the Lions finish with a 30-3 record and an Elite Eight win in the NCAA D-II Tournament in Louisville, Ky. He left the program as the winningest coach with 413 career wins. He currently is third-best in all-time wins by a men's basketball coach in the MIAA.



GIVENS STEDDUM last competed in track and field as a Missouri Southern student-athlete in 1995, yet her name continues to dominate the program's record books.

She still holds many of the top 10 outdoor marks in both the triple jump and the long jump. The same can be said for indoor events. She is one of two women in school history to surpass 41 feet in the outdoor triple jump and one of three to surpass 19 feet in the indoor long jump.

Givens Steddum was MSSU's first ever female individual national champion with her outdoor triple jump victory in 1994, which she followed up the next year by winning the indoor triple jump at the national championships. Throughout her career at MSSU, she earned All-American honors nine times. In 1993, she was named MSSU's Female Athlete of the Year and claimed the honor again in 1995. She also received the E.O. & Virginia Humphrey Award, given to the institution's outstanding student-athlete of the year.

CLASS Notes

1970s

Diane Reid Adams, '71, was recognized as the 2021 Missouri Southern Spirit of Service awardee for her outstanding volunteerism to her community.

Ron Lankford, '71, retired from the Joplin School District as assistant superintendent for business services after five years of service. This is his third retirement from public education. Lankford retired from the Webb City School District in 2010 after 33 years of service and the Missouri Department of Elementary and Secondary Education in 2016 after six years of service.

Rick Tallon, '76, is a member of the American Dental Association's Standards Committee on Dental Informatics in Savannah, Ga.

1980s

Zander Brietzke, '82, recently published his most recent book, "Magnum Opus: The Cycle Plays of Eugene O'Neill."

Craig Boyd, '82, is a retirement specialist at TIAA in Flower Mound, Texas.

Marty Schoenthaler, '82, is president of Hood & Associates CPAs in Bartlesville, Okla.

Kayla (Hoffman) Pekarek, '84, is the admissions and marketing coordinator for Joplin Health & Rehabilitation Center.

Carmen Wilke, '86, is a group membership sales agent for AAA in St. Louis, Mo.

Ron Berry, '87, is the general sales manager for Personal Comfort in Overland Park, Kan.

Brad Burris, '87, is product manager for Schunk Xycarb Technology in Bethel, Conn.

Brent Beckley, '88, is director of National Guard and Reserve support for Rubicon Planning in Jefferson City, Mo.

Daryl Price, '89, is the vice president-solution sales for Sconce Inc. in the Greenville-Spartanburg-Anderson area in South Carolina.

1990s

Richard Taffner, '91, is the regional director for the Arkansas Department of Health in Gassville, Ark.

Suzanne Hull, '92, has been appointed director of MOSO CAPS. The Center for Advanced Professional Studies is a national model for collaboration between local school districts, higher education and industry. The Missouri Southern CAPS is set to serve its first students in Fall 2022.

Richard Davidson, '92, is the mayor pro tem for the city of Neosho, Mo.

Kevin Hooks, '92, is now the chief community officer for Acorns Financial Services in Santa Ana, Calif.

Ken Schultz, '92, is the head of live video productions and streaming for Jack Henry & Associates in Monett, Mo.

William Spence, '92, serves as fire marshal for Branson (Mo.) Fire and Rescue.

Want to see **your business** in one of these locations?



MSSU Athletics would love to partner with you this upcoming school year!

WANT MORE INFO?

Contact Ryan Snyder at:
417-625-9815 or
Snyder-R@mssu.edu

Brian McMullen, '93, is applied research chief engineer for Lockheed Martin in Douglas County, Colo.

Teresa Vlastic, '95, is leisure group sales manager for University Orlando Resort in Windermere, Fla.

Robert Sapko, '96, is an angular developer for Centriq Training and the founder/owner/developer of Huckleback Golf in Nixa, Mo.

J. Matthew Berry, '96, is manager for property claims, risk management and insurance at Travel + Leisure in Orlando, Fla.

Tony Mathis, '96, is territory manager for CraneWorks Inc. in Grove, Okla.

Autumn Palmer, '97, was selected as a science category finalist for the Presidential Award for Excellence in Mathematics & Science Teaching.

Kevin Wallen, '97, is the vice president of business development for CaseClients in Dallas, Texas.

Karin Miller, '98, earned her doctorate of education in educational leadership, curriculum and instruction from Evangel University.

Wendy Willey, '98, is an infection control practitioner for Kindred Healthcare in the Dallas/Fort Worth, Texas, area.

Shari Erwin, '98, serves as the chancellor's chief of staff for the University of Arkansas at Little Rock.

Mark Valentine, '98, is a certified mountain-biking coach for the National Interscholastic Cycling Association in Fayetteville, Ark.

Nathan (Nate) Campbell, '99, has been named the new hotel general manager for Sleep Inn, Joplin, with Iowa 80 Truckstop, Inc.

Stephanie Reither, '99, was named a 2021 Golden Apple Award winner by the Joplin Area Chamber of Commerce. She is a teacher at Cecil Floyd Elementary.

Ronda Friend, '99, is a quality improvement specialist for Mercy Hospital in Joplin.

Donald Simon, '99, is an adjunct instructor for Drexel University Online in Kansas City, Mo.

Robert Eudy, '99, is construction manager at Solis Mammography in Forney, Texas.

Clay Routledge, '99, is a professor at North Dakota State University and recently started an online magazine called Profectus with the Archbridge Institute, where he is a senior fellow.

Brooke Vanhoutan, '99, is the regional sales manager for Convelo Insurance Group in Kansas City, Mo.

2000s

Paul Perry, '00, is engineering manager for C2FO in Liberty, Mo.

Avery Hudson, '00, is chief audit executive for AgCredit in St. Louis, Mo.

Lori Starr, '01, is the district psychologist for Carthage R-9 School District.

Tina Zeagler, '01, is assistant director at Burrell Behavioral Health in Springfield, Mo.

Blake Bard, '02, is vice president, foundation, Bayfront Health-St. Petersburg, Fla., and Vice President of the Orlando Health Foundation.

Jason Northern, '02, is the executive director of operations and major gifts at Missouri University of Science and Technology in Rolla, Mo.

Amber Cupp, '02, is a human resources specialist for Anderson Engineering Inc. in Bethel, Mo.

Nate Ulepich, '02, was awarded Account Manager of the Year and the President's Club Award by Medtronic.

Anna Brock, '02, was named Carl Junction Schools' 2021 Elementary Teacher of the Year. She teaches second grade at Carl Junction Primary.

Justin Roberts, '02, is a partner and accounting and auditing director at BKD in Houston, Texas.

Matt Reid, '02, is a consulting system engineer for Fortinet in Topeka, Kan.

Patti Judy, '02, is a registered nurse at Mercy Hospital in Joplin, Mo.

Chad DeGraffenreid, '02, is business development manager for Simplified E-Solutions in St. Charles, Mo.

Linda Percy, '02, is the human resources manager for Marck Industries in Lampe, Mo.

Kristi Hasler, '03, is the Medicare Advantage and supplemental adviser for Assurance IQ in the Springfield-Branson, Mo., area.

Melanie D'Anna, '03, is the continuous improvement and quality manager for Bass Pro in Springfield, Mo.

Cliff Murphy, '03, is director of operations and technology for the University of South Carolina in Columbia, S.C.

Darren Gaffney, '03, is director of sales for Me & My Big Ideas LLC in Rogers, Ark.

Dr. James Shuls, '04, has been named the dean for the College of Education at Southeastern University in Lakeland, Fla.

Macee Boyer, '04, is the sales director for BT Furnishings in Dallas, Texas.

Beth Meeker, '04, recently completed her computer programming studies with Turing School of Software and Design. She is working as a full stack developer for Knight-Swift Transportation Holdings in Denver, Colo.

Amber Robertson, '04, is the regional human resources director for Amcor in Joplin, Mo.

Brian Lyons, '04, is managing director of BCS Financial Services in St. Louis, Mo.

Tully Lale, '05, is regional manager of strategic partnerships for Western Governors University in St. Augustine, Fla.

Keith Lewis, '05, is the senior .NET developer for TEAMClinics in Jenks, Okla.

David Benham, '05, is principal data scientist and manager of innovation for Laredo Petroleum Inc. in Oklahoma City, Okla.

Grant Cottrell, '05, is the creative director/product development manager at Nile Supplier Services in Bentonville, Ark.

Janette Klein, '05, is a librarian at the University of Central Missouri in Warrensburg, Mo.

Pamela Mense, '05, is branch office administrator for Edward Jones in Joplin.

Jason Phelps, '05, is a senior technical recruiter for Amazon in Springfield, Mo.

Angela Atherton, '06, is a partner at Sprott, Golden & Bardwell in Rogers, Ark.

Paul Hart, '06, is vice president/Nexus manager for Regions Bank in St. Charles, Mo.

Amanda Adams, '06, was selected as the 2021-22 Teacher of the Year for Springfield Public Schools. She was also selected as one of three Southwest Missouri Regional Teachers of the Year and competed for the title of Missouri State Teacher of the Year. She serves as the coordinator of choice programs and student experiences for Springfield Public Schools and recently earned her EdD degree in Educational Leadership, Curriculum and Instruction from Evangel University.

TJ Gerlach, '06, is the new public information manager for ODOT's District 8 in Broken Arrow, Okla.

Kyle Rutledge, '06, was named the head coach of the Pittsburg State University Track & Field program.

Erin Vorhees, '07, is a partner for the Arkansas division of the Potts Law Firm in Rogers, Ark.

Jeremi Wofford, '07, is the senior RTO policy specialist for Ameren in Springfield, Mo.

Will Lentz, '07, an appraisal review specialist for Great Southern Bank in Springfield, Mo.

Chris Robotham, '07, is the environment, health and safety manager for Anheuser-Busch InBev in St. Louis, Mo.

Bobby Drake, '08, is a lithotripsy technologist for NextMed in Dallas, Texas.

Mark Ostendorf, '08, is an application support specialist for Starcom Computer Corporation in Belton, Mo.

Sherry Whiteman, '08, is program director/department chair for the Respiratory Care Department at Missouri Southern State University.

Colin Bado, '08, was named assistant principal at McKinney Boyd High School in McKinney, Texas.

Paul Whetstone, '08, recently portrayed the character Malcom in "One Dead Donkey and a Bullet," which was recognized by the Europe Film Festival for European Best Comedy 2021. He has also portrayed Semore Trollop in the film "In Autumn They Fly Away," which was submitted to the Berlin International Film Festival.

Stephen Cole, '08, is a venture partner with Trammell Venture Partners in Orange County, Calif.

Lora (Dean) Zaidarhzauva, '09, is the director of facilitation and training for Renaissance Management and Training Solutions in Kansas City, Mo.

Alex Kieslich, '09, is senior director of sales for Proctor & Gamble in Fayetteville, Ark.

Ryan Robertson, '09, is director of procurement for Freeman Company in Dallas, Texas.

Corey Anderson, '09, is an account executive for Fire Door Solutions in Overland Park, Kan.

T.J. Fazio, '09, is an accounting manager for Jenfab Cleaning Solutions in Nixa, Mo.

Tanner Lux, '09, is a cost accounting manager for Chart Industries Inc. in Ball Ground, Ga.

Corey Anderson, '09, is an account executive for Netro in Overland Park, Kan.

Austin Rosenthal, '09, is interim director of business at Northeastern State University in Oklahoma.

Buzz Treadwell, '09, is the director of operations for Arning Companies Inc. in Fayetteville, Ark.

Wes Coatney, '09, is the chief of police for the Aurora and Marionville Police Department in Jefferson City, Mo.

2010s

Arthur Lechuga, '10, was named Finance Manager-Quality & Cost for Constellation Brands in the greater Chicago area.

Sterling Carter IV, '10, is a business account relationship partner for The Propel Group DFW in Dallas, Texas.

Jessie Wood, '10, is a territory manager for Varian in St. Louis, Mo.

Brien Jones, '10, is an instructor for Summit Aviation VBT in Bentonville, Ark.

David Clark, '10, is a senior product manager for Amazon in the Dallas/Fort Worth, Texas, area.

Channell Lloyd, '11, is a quality engineer for Burgess-Norton Manufacturing Company.

Kellen Anderson, '11, is director of operations for GoHealth Urgent Care in St. Louis, Mo.

Josef Batek, '11, is a PM technician for PerkinElmer Inc. in Columbia, Mo.

Melissa (Holt) Nance, '11, is an admissions recruiter/adviser for Labette Community College in Parsons, Kan.

Shaun Buck, '11, is the event and media relations coordinator for the Joplin Sports Authority.

Sara (Lewis) Stark, '11, is a senior finance manager at Microsoft in Seattle, Wash.

Matthew Edwards, '11, is senior compliance business control analyst for Citi financial services in St. Louis, Mo.

Jolea Apon, '11, is an AR coordinator for Watco Supply Chain Services International Springdale, Ark.

Travis Ritter, '11, is human resources manager for Quaker Windows & Doors in Newton County, Mo.

AnnaMaegan Kirschner, '11, is an award-winning artist and owns The Artist's Circle Gallery and AMK Studio based in Dallas, Texas.

Dustin Sisney, '11, is director of Integrated Partnerships at BNC Television in the Los Angeles Metro Area.

Flint Whitehead, '11, was named assistant high-school principal for the Carthage R-9 District.

Sterling Carter IV, '11, is a senior recruiter for Strive Consulting in Dallas, Texas.

Kevin Bujarski, '12, is the lead business analyst-sales applications and analytics for Tyson Foods in Lowell, Ark.

Nathan Bramwell, '12, is associate director of marketing for the University of Arkansas in Fayetteville, Ark.

Jake Ralston, '12, is the principal data engineer for REPL Group in Bentonville, Ark.

Shannon Kuhn, '12, is a clinical specialist-neuromodulation for Abbot in Indianapolis, Ind.

Larissa Wyler, '12, is the owner of Crossbow Consulting in Tulsa, Okla.

Kathy Nicodemus, '12, was named a 2021 Golden Apple Award winner by the Joplin Area Chamber of Commerce. She is a teacher at Irving Elementary.

Amanda Elliott, '13, is the flagship store manager at Palmetto Moon in North Charleston, S.C.

Tosha Cunningham, '13, is a recruiter for Kansas City University in Joplin.

Zach Brasher, '13, is regional sales manager for EBSCO Information Services in Redondo Beach, Calif.

Somchai Yang, '13, is a senior IT security engineer for Xcel Energy in Springfield, Mo.

Shonte Clay-Fulgham, '14, is unit director for the Boys & Girls Clubs of America in Springfield, Mo.

Kiley Siebenalar, '14, is the school-age services coordinator for the Joplin Family YMCA.

Lindsay (Baker) Aycock, '14, is a marketing specialist for Arvest Bank in Rogers, Ark.

Nick Jones, '15, a manager at Mullins Salvage in Tulsa, Okla.

Blake James, '15, is the owner of Show-Me Home Maintenance in Joplin.

Jared Palmer, '15, is general manager for BigShots Golf in Springfield, Mo.

Ryan Buerk, '15, is a finance and insurance manager for FRS Power Sports & Equipment in Memphis, Tenn.

Fallon Donlan, '15, is a senior sales recruiter for Stryker in Dallas, Texas.

Clark Tanksley, '15, is a commercial portfolio manager for Busey Bank in St. Louis.

Sara Bloch, '15, is a program manager for Centene Corporation in St. Louis, Mo.

Jonathan Ernst, '15, has been promoted to Senior Team Lead, IT Systems Management at Cerner Corp in the Kansas City Metro area.

Jim Furgerson, '15, retired as fire chief with the city of Joplin. He took a new position with Missouri's State Emergency Management Agency.

Rachel Hensley, '15, was named Carl Junction Schools' 2021 District Teacher of the Year. She was also honored as the 2021 Secondary Teacher of the Year and received the 2021 Junior High Teacher Impact Award.

Chloe McMains, '15, is interim director of University Relations and Marketing at Missouri Southern State University.

Eli Moran, '16, is a member on the Board of Directors for Lafayette House.

Whitney Mestelle, '16, was named one of Idaho Business Review's Accomplished Under 40 for 2021.

Wallace Clay, '16, joined Ten 10 sports and entertainment basketball agency.

Dawn Jones, '16, is an environmental public health specialist for the city of Joplin.

Ethan Hutcheson, '16, is an adoption manager for Cerner Corporation in Kansas City, Mo.

Karoline Riley, '16, is an accountant for Stone Financial CPA & Wealth Management in Springfield, Mo.

Jordan Barnes, '16, is an assistant account executive for The Alchemedia Project in Springfield, Mo.

Benjamin Olson, '16, is an industrial engineer for CNH Industrial Reman in Springfield, Mo.

Dajuan Dancy, '16, is senior business development representative for Square in St. Louis, Mo.

Chasitie Foster, '16, is a broker associate for the Sue Carter Real Estate Group in Springfield, Mo.

Kaneisha Giles, '17, is an associate relations specialist for SelectQuote Insurance Services in Overland Park, Kan.

Olivia (Massey) Schoeber, '17, is a registered nurse for Maningas Cosmetic Surgery in Joplin, Mo.

Liz (Newberry) Pirtle, '17, is a recruitment and onboarding specialist for SeekingSitters in Fort Smith, Ark.

Severiano Smith, '17, is the assistant golf pro at the National Golf Club in Kansas City.

Dayanaira Davenport, '18, is the executive assistant for the Downtown Joplin Alliance.

Sierra Wells, '18, is a recent graduate of Missouri State University, where she earned her Doctorate of Physical Therapy degree.

Maria Júlia Uchôa Teixeira Lucas, '18, is a certified law student practitioner for Interprofessional Center for Counseling and Legal Services in Minneapolis, Minn.

Whitney Dunbar, '18, is the assistant director for Lee's Summit (Mo.) Main Street Inc.

Sierra Wells, '18, is a student physical therapist for Mercy Hospital in Springfield, Mo.

Kate Kelley, '18, is the coalition and full potential coordinator for The Alliance of Southwest Missouri in Joplin.

Skylar Phillips, '18, is an assistant golf professional for Briarbrook Golf Course in Carl Junction, Mo.

Amanda Hampton, '19, is the life and health manager for Kraft Insurance Services in Joplin.

Cydney Churchwell, '19, is a master level psychology intern for Ozark Center in Joplin.

Sarah Glidewell, '19, is an EL teacher at Fairview Elementary in Carthage, Mo.

2020s

Ashley Allen, '20, is the family self-sufficiency coordinator for the Columbia Housing Authority in Columbia, Mo.

Kaylea Furgerson, '20, is the director of community relations for The Alliance of Southwest Missouri.

Nathan McAlister, '20, teaches high school art for the Carthage R-9 School District.

Brian Plutino, '21, is a work place health and safety specialist at Amazon, located in Lakeland, Fla.

Emily Turley, '21, is a junior-high social studies teacher for Carthage R-9 School District.

Lion Cubs



Cody, '12, and Lindsey McClafferty welcomed Bella Rae on March 9, 2021.



Colin, '09, and Courtney Bado welcomed Charlotte Ann on March 26, 2021.

Courtney Baker Mosley, '08, welcomed Chloe LaShae on June 30, 2021.



Ryan Buffington, '10 and **Kelli Buffington (Bax), '10**, welcomed Bo Ryan Buffington on July 22, 2021.

Marriages

Tyler Palmer, '20, and Lexi Mercer were married on May 2, 2021.

Brandon Guerin, '19, and Catherine Pierini were married on May 23, 2020.

Shakira Rhoads, '15 and '20, married Jake Gammill on June 5, 2021.

Stephanie Jones Francis, '99 and '06, married Jason Francis on June 6, 2021.

Tony Sfortunato, '20, and **Jaimie Blondin, '20**, were married on July 9, 2021.



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IN MEMORIAM

DATES AS OF SEPTEMBER 6, 2021

ALUMNI

Shara Wyler, '11 | March 25, 2021
Steven Jones, '79 | March 27, 2021
Chad Smith, '00 | April 3, 2021
Geree (Kinkade) Riggs, '50 | April 5, 2021
Jere Marcum, '69 | April 13, 2021
Michael Harp, '81 | April 15, 2021
Sally (Wells) Beck, '59 | April 19, 2021
Franklin Woodbury, '63 | April 19, 2021
Lisa Mounce, '95 | April 30, 2021
Richard Warden, '73 | May 8, 2021
Brenda Bruner, '75 | May 10, 2021
Charles Turner, '82 | May 15, 2021
Jarrett Herrell, '81 | May 17, 2021
Jerry Gasser, '90 | May 21, 2021
Geneva Roberts, '16 | May 23, 2021
Lonna Lewis, '52 | June 4, 2021
Margorie (Toutz) Auld, '49 | June 5, 2021
Patricia Caughron, '98 | June 7, 2021
Jackie Lemmons, '59 | June 7, 2021
Pamela Hankins, '75 | June 8, 2021
Allen Baker, '89 | June 13, 2021

Marilyn (Green) Gordon, '75 | June 13, 2021
Mark Shrum, '13 | June 13, 2021
Freda Whitely, '83 | June 18, 2021
Charles Hendrick, '75 | June 20, 2021
Margret Golden, '82 | June 25, 2021
Mary Ruark, '76 | June 27, 2021
Bryann (Outt) Baird, '11 | June 29, 2021
Craig Schoenhals, '89 | July 5, 2021
Kathy Mantle, '98 | July 6, 2021
Katherine (Brown) Shallenburger, '90 | July 9, 2021
Bonnie (Lietz) Hartman, '84 | July 12, 2021
Brandon Jessip, '13 | July 14, 2021
Cleva Moore, '99 | July 16, 2021
Russell Schultz, '82 | July 17, 2021
Marsha (Elbert) Patton, '97 | Aug. 3, 2021
Kathryn (Glander) Cash, '82 | Aug. 5, 2021
Aaron Stephens, '90 | Aug. 7, 2021
Mary (Sherer) Jones, '71 | Aug. 10, 2021
Michael Wilson, '76 | Aug. 15, 2021
Marcia (Selby) Pruitt, '62 | Aug. 17, 2021
Archie Dixon, '70 | Aug. 23, 2021

Hazel (Herring) Dunham, '78 | Aug. 23, 2021
DeGee (Mieir) Brown, '86 | Aug. 27, 2021
Billy Guy Henry, '92 | Aug. 27, 2021

John Ford, '91 | Aug. 28, 2021
James "Kin" Norman, '79 | Aug. 29, 2021
Twila (Jordan) Stovern, '85 | Sept. 4, 2021

FACULTY/STAFF

Paula Shirley | Aug. 2, 2021
Administrative assistant, Residence Life

Linda Sadler | Oct. 13, 2021
Student employment director, Financial Aid

RETIREES

Max Oldham | April 10, 2021
Athletics director

Dallas Fortner | June 26, 2021
Campus security

Gloria Bowman | May 10, 2021

Dr. Robert McDermid | July 3, 2021
Psychology professor

Gloria Faine | June 12, 2021
Teacher Education instructor

James "Jim" Phillips | Aug. 20, 2021
Women's basketball coach

Betty Harris | June 25, 2021
Accounting professor

FRIENDS

Donna Mosher | April 25, 2021

Keith Sovereign | July 13, 2021

Virginia Leffen | May 2, 2021

Roy Shaver | July 14, 2021

Warren Olson | May 8, 2021

Melvin Henderson | July 19, 2021

Mickey Heatherly | June 4, 2021

Mike Pence | July 29, 2021
Foundation Board-past member

Kevin Wilson | June 8, 2021
Lion-Hearted Award, '13

John Good | Aug. 24, 2021

Virginia Long | June 13, 2021

Carlos "Denny" Frieze | Sept. 2, 2021

William "Bill" Coles | July 4, 2021

Diane "Annie" Clarkson | Sept. 4, 2021

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BASKETBALL

HOME SCHEDULE | 2021-22

** WOMEN ONLY | * MEN ONLY

NOVEMBER

11.12	VS. HENDERSON STATE**	7:30 PM
11.13	VS. HARDING**	5:30 PM
11.19	VS. SOUTHWEST BAPTIST*	7:30 PM
11.20	VS. TRUMAN STATE*	3:30 PM
11.27	VS. OKLAHOMA PANHANDLE STATE**	1:30 PM
11.27	VS. JOHN BROWN*	3:30 PM

DECEMBER

12.02	VS. CENTRAL OKLAHOMA	5:30 & 7:30 PM
12.04	VS. NEWMAN	1:30 & 3:30 PM
12.13	VS. MCKENDREE**	5:30 PM
12.16	VS. CENTRAL MISSOURI	5:30 & 7:30 PM
12.18	VS. LINCOLN	1:30 & 3:30 PM

JANUARY

1.08	VS. PITTSBURG STATE	1:30 & 3:30 PM
1.13	VS. WASHBURN	5:30 & 7:30 PM
1.15	VS. EMPORIA STATE	1:30 & 3:30 PM
1.26	VS. ROGERS STATE	5:30 & 7:30 PM
1.29	VS. NORTHEASTERN STATE	1:30 & 3:30 PM

FEBRUARY

2.10	VS. MISSOURI WESTERN	5:30 & 7:30 PM
2.12	VS. NORTHWEST MISSOURI	1:30 & 3:30 PM



WHY I GIVE

JOHN & NANCY MESSICK

The reason Dr. John and Nancy Messick have made it a priority to provide financial support to the university over the years is really quite simple.

"I feel like Missouri Southern has invested quite a bit in Nancy and myself," says John, a professor emeritus in the Biology & Environmental Health Department.

In fact, it was at MSSU that the couple, who have been married for more than 35 years, first met.

Nancy earned her associate's degree from Missouri Southern in 1976, and later took a position as secretary for the science and math departments.

"John joined the faculty on a one-year appointment," she says. "We dated from afar as he finished up his doctorate work and taught in Kansas City. Thank goodness a tenure track position opened here."

When he rejoined the biology faculty, Nancy had moved on to another department and later served as administrative assistant for former President Julio León. They were married in 1985.

In addition to teaching, John served for a number of years as department chair, and later as the Dean of Arts & Sciences. He served for a brief period as Vice President of Academic Affairs before returning to the classroom. Nancy retired in 2007, while John was named Faculty Emeritus after he retired in the spring of 2013, and has continued to teach nearly every semester.

The couple have given back to the university in a variety of ways, including providing funds to scholarships, the Green & Gold fund, and in memory of former colleagues. They are among the most long-standing members of the Loyal Lions recognition society – having given gifts each year, dating back to 1988.

"Students need the resources to get their education," says Nancy. "And at Missouri Southern, they get more one-on-one time with their instructors."

"I really believe that a university education is an experience that requires a lot of time and commitment," John says. "If we can help offset (the cost) so they can concentrate more on their studies, so much the better."

Donors are recognized as Loyal Lions after making gifts for three consecutive years. They receive a certificate each year, recognition on the website and invitations to special events. To make a gift to the Missouri Southern Foundation, please call **417-625-3104** or **417-625-9622**. To make a gift online, visit www.mssu.edu/giving.



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If you are a parent of an alum and they no longer live with you, please call 417-659-LION or visit www.mssu.edu/alumnicontact to update their contact information!

Call for Nominations!

Taking nominations for:

Lion-Hearted Award

The LionHearted Award at Missouri Southern is presented to someone who embodies the true heart and soul of Lion Spirit and has made significant contributions to the institution, either through monetary or voluntary assistance. Awarded annually, it recognizes the outstanding contributions of MSSU's wonderful supporters.

Spirit of Service Award

The Spirit of Service Award is an award given to an alum of Missouri Southern making significant contributions to their community through their time, actions, talents and dedication (outside any required volunteer work done for their employer). The honoree selected should serve as a role model for compassion, and service and be striving to make the world a better place. They should have a passion for helping others in their community. Note: They do not have to live in or impact the Joplin or surrounding communities.

Make your nominations here:

www.mssu.edu/advancement/alumni - "Recognition Awards"

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Summer Dates: **TBD**

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