

CROSSROADS

MISSOURI SOUTHERN STATE UNIVERSITY | FALL 2022



VIRTUALLY ASSURED

Nursing Department launches VR sim lab

Senior Riley Laver brings Green Bandana Project to campus

Early MSSU grads gather for annual reunion



from the editor

"We keep moving forward, opening new doors and doing new things, because we're curious and curiosity keeps leading us down new paths."

- Walt Disney

There's a lot to be said for trying something different or outside of your comfort zone.

I thought about this one morning this fall, watching as students lined up to ascend the two flights of a mobile staircase, strap in and then taking that final step from the top to ride a zipline across the Oval. Some of the students screamed in excitement, some kept their eyes shut tight and gritted their teeth, others seemed nonchalant ... but nearly everyone had a smile on their face when their feet touched ground.

If there's a through line for the Fall 2022 issue of Crossroads, it's about taking that step into the unknown and being open to new experiences.

The cover story takes a look at a new addition to the Nursing Department – a virtual reality (VR) simulation lab which will give students an opportunity to practice the skills they've learned in the classroom in a virtual environment.

You'll meet senior Riley Laver who has brought the Green Bandana Project to campus to help students feel more

comfortable addressing mental-health issues. You'll hear from non-traditional students in the new Adult Degree Completion program, who have seen the importance of coming back to school to finish their degrees.

Then there's Joplin Police Department Capt. Nick Jimenez, who undertook the challenge of attending the prestigious Southern Police Institute; and Maria Contreras, a native of Chile who became Missouri Southern's first second-generation international student by following in her mother's footsteps.

There are also features on an alum serving as a caddy in the LIV tournament, the ACACIA center's work to serve local families, and a group of alumni who have been gathering together for golf and good times for nearly 30 years.

We always look forward to sharing stories from Missouri Southern with you, and we hope you enjoy this issue of Crossroads. If you have a story idea, news or comment on this publication, we want to hear from you. Drop us a line at crossroads@mssu.edu.

Thanks for reading, and we'll see you again next spring!

Editor

Crossroads Magazine
Missouri Southern State University



**2022 BEST OF
CASE DISTRICT VI
AWARD WINNER**

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New location coming soon to Neosho, Missouri

FROM THE PRESIDENT



Greetings from Missouri Southern!

It's been a very positive fall semester for campus, as we achieved growth in the number of new students enrolled (especially freshman and international students), developed new academic programs and learning opportunities, and began to develop the university's next strategic plan. It's an exciting time to be a Lion!

I know that you will enjoy this edition of Crossroads. Many of the articles underscore the long-standing strengths of Missouri Southern and demonstrate innovation by our faculty, staff and students.

The cover story features the Nursing Department's new Virtual Reality Simulation Lab. Research tells us that teaching and learning is often enhanced by immersive, "hands-on" experiences, and our nursing students will greatly benefit from the use of VR as part of their education.

In this edition, you will also learn about our new Adult Degree Completion program, which provides convenient and customized pathways for individuals to complete a college degree or a credential. As a point of context, there are more than 27,000 adults (25 years or older) in Jasper and Newton Counties alone with some college but no degree. We are excited to help individuals achieve their educational goals whether it be for career advancement or personal satisfaction.

Other stories in this edition of Crossroads highlight the successes of MSSU alumni, 2022 Homecoming activities, and a fascinating international connection that now spans two generations. Also, I know you will be inspired by the leadership of MSSU student-athlete and honors student Riley Laver in bringing the Green Bandana Project to Missouri Southern. This initiative will raise awareness and help support those on our campus facing mental-health challenges. It's a great example of the many ways we, as a university, strive to support the success of every student.

The strength of our university is its people – certainly our faculty, staff and students – but also the many alumni and friends like you who support MSSU as an advocate, volunteer, or donor. Please know that you are appreciated.

Lions Together. Lions Forward.

Dr. Dean Van Galen
President, MSSU



AROUND CAMPUS

MSSU FEATURED ON AMAZON PRIME SERIES

"The College Tour" has spotlighted Missouri Southern as part of its sixth season, which debuted Nov. 9 on the Amazon Prime streaming service.

The series is hosted by Alex Boylan, winner of the second season of "The Amazing Race." Each episode focuses on a single college or university, with personal stories shared by students offering an inside look at what it's like to attend there.

The episode features 10 MSSU students sharing their experience on campus – from the advanced medical

school program, Global Leaders, and residential life to the perspective of international students and athletes.

"Student, faculty and staff support during the filming of our episode was overwhelming," said Dr. Shellie Hewitt, dean of admissions. "Our story provides prospective students and their families with valuable information about our campus and what it means to be a Missouri Southern Lion.

"I'm proud of the work that went into this project and I'm ready for the world to see how amazing MSSU is through the experiences our students have shared."

BOARD OF GOVERNORS APPROVES NEW MKEAP PARTNERSHIP WITH KCU

The Board of Governors at Missouri Southern has given unanimous approval to a new partnership with Kansas City University. This unique partnership with KCU is exclusive to MSSU and will expand opportunities for students interested in entering the medical or dental fields.

During September's board meeting, members approved a new agreement and then attended a formal signing ceremony between the two universities for the early acceptance program. Qualified students will have the opportunity to complete their baccalaureate degree with an accelerated, three-year curriculum before making a seamless transition to KCU.

"This is something very special," said Dr. Dean Van Galen, president of Missouri Southern. "Our partnership with Kansas City University began in 2015. Since then, 88 talented students have met the high standards to be accepted as Missouri Southern freshmen. Thirty-two students have successfully completed their degree and matriculated to the outstanding medical-school program at KCU.

"This agreement expands the previous partnership to include dental medicine. It allows for a cohort of 25 students for osteopathic medicine and 10 for dental, under the new name MSSU-KCU Early Acceptance Program (MKEAP)."

Marc B. Hahn, DO, president and chief executive officer at Kansas City University, said the partnership with MSSU has become very important to KCU.

"For over a century, Kansas City University has educated physicians for Missouri and the region," he said. "Today, we're the sixth largest medical school in the country, the No. 1 producer of physicians for the state of Missouri, the No. 2 producer for Kansas, and the ninth leading producer of primary-care physicians for the entire country.

"These are some of the best and brightest students, and this program will make an impact on access to medical and dental care for Joplin and the region."



FACULTY MEMBERS HONORED WITH ANNUAL AWARDS

Five faculty members were recognized this fall for their commitment to students and service to the university.

Dr. David Penning, assistant professor of biology and environmental health, received the 2022 Governor's Award for Excellence in Education.

The annual award is presented to an outstanding faculty member from each of Missouri's four-year higher-education institutions. Criteria for nomination includes effective teaching and advising, a commitment to high standards of excellence, and success in nurturing student achievement.

Also recognized was the 2021 recipient of the Governor's

Award – **Kim Rogers**, a faculty member in the Dental Hygiene Department.

The 2022 Outstanding Teacher and Advisor recipients were also announced. The annual awards are based on nominations submitted by Missouri Southern students.

Kathi Christian, a faculty member in the Dental Hygiene Department, and **Dr. Angie Durborow**, an instructor in the Teacher Education Department, were both recipients of the Outstanding Teacher Award.

Dr. Nicole Shoaf, assistant professor of political science, was the recipient of the 2022 Outstanding Advisor Award.



Dr. David Penning



Kim Rogers



Kathi Christian



Dr. Angie Durborow



Dr. Nicole Shoaf

UPWARD BOUND RECEIVES FIVE-YEAR GRANT

The Upward Bound program at Missouri Southern has been approved for a grant of more than \$1.6 million to fund the program for the next five years.

The grant from the U.S. Department of Education will award \$334,232 per year for five years – for a total of \$1,671,160.

The program, which was established by the federal Economic Opportunity Act of 1964 and the Higher Education Act of 1965, provides academic support to prepare high-school students for post-secondary education. It serves nearly 70 students from the Joplin, Carl Junction, Webb City, Carthage and East Newton school districts.

For students participating in the program, Upward Bound offers a variety of services designed to help them prepare for a successful transition into college, said Robin Hicklin, director of the Missouri Southern program.

"We offer monthly workshops on campus covering topics such as career counseling, life skills and the college application and scholarship process," he said. "We also make school visits, check grades and offer tutoring services. During the summer, we do a simulated college experience for five weeks. The students live in the dorms, attend classes and take a cultural trip."



NEW MURAL BLOOMS IN WEBSTER HALL

An area in Webster Hall formerly used as storage has received a colorful makeover.

Kyle McKenzie, an associate professor in the Department of Art and Design, and participants in Missouri Southern's Leadership Academy created a new mural on two walls adjacent to the main staircase. New furniture was added to create a student-centered gathering place.

Members of the Leadership Academy – a program designed to inspire, develop and connect leaders across campus – picked up paint brushes to bring McKenzie's wall sketches to vibrant life.

"As part of the program, we were tasked with completing a service project for the university," said Dr. Will Mountz, director of the Adult Degree Completion program and a



member of the 2021-22 Leadership Academy cohort. "There were several great ideas, but the one we centered on was fixing up some space for students. We all felt Webster Hall could use a little more love."

The area near the staircase in Webster had previously been used to store furniture. New furniture for student use has been donated for the project by Missouri Southern alumni owned company, Wayside Furniture.

"As planning went on, they contacted me about creating a mural in the space," said McKenzie. "The idea was to create a floor-to-ceiling mural filled with vegetation to make it feel like an enclosed, natural space."

VOICES OF SOUTHERN

RILEY LAVER

Senior international business major

BY AMANTHA DAVIS, SENIOR, ENGLISH MAJOR

Stepping into the unknown can fill you with the feeling of hopelessness.

That's why Riley Laver, a senior international business major and goalkeeper for the women's soccer team, wants to create a bridge between acknowledging that you need help and going to the people that are there to help. The Green Bandana Project is designed to do just that.

"I had gone to a District-2 convention last November," said Laver. "That's where I heard about the Green Bandana Project and was like, 'Why don't we have that? Why don't I know where the counselor's office is?'"

The Green Bandana Project is a mental-health and suicide-prevention initiative. Students wear a green bandana on their person to alert others that they are someone they can approach for help, whether it be a conversation or asking about on- and off-campus resources that are available.

Laver spoke with Crossroads about the program and how she is working to spread the word across campus.

TIED TOGETHER

The bandana is green because that is the color of mental-health awareness and our school colors are green and yellow, so we really look like we belong here. By wearing a bandana, it helps show people that you're someone they can come talk to or that you know our campus resources.

READY FOR LAUNCH

I've been working by word-of-mouth so far. I've talked to frats, athletics and faculty. Now it's really just spreading the word to the students. I ended up talking to Dr. Van Galen, president of MSSU, and he helped start things up. Suddenly I was calling people and working really close with Cori Reid, associate athletic director for internal operations, and Jamie Williams, academic support specialist, who helped with the more technical

stuff. Through the whole thing, I haven't felt alone. A lot of people stepped up and now that it is here, others have joined in like Project Stay and Omicron Delta Kappa, and I've had teachers ask me to come in to their classes and talk to students.

AN UNSPOKEN ISSUE

Mental health among athletes isn't something that is often talked about. If we had the mental-health resources around when I was a freshman, my time here would have been different. A lot of athletes' lives are on a constant schedule between school and sports with no time in between to do other things. It's stressful, especially for those who are incoming. That's why mental health is one of our big initiatives in our Student Athlete Advisory Committee.

A GAME-CHANGER

I'm a senior, so I'm going to graduate soon and I would hate to see this project fade away. Having someone who is ready to step in and is passionate about it is important. We're also hoping to bring in speakers but we're really just here for support. We don't want to take away from the mental-health clubs already on campus, but if they want us there, I'm happy to show up. I'm honestly just excited to launch the project. Mental-health challenges are everywhere, so it's nice to see a change trying to be made. I think it'll be a game-changer.





“Lions Level Up” was the theme for Homecoming 2022.

From video games in the Lions Den, virtual reality experiences, a Wii Sports tournament, and a screening of the latest “Sonic the Hedgehog” movie, it was a chance for students to show their school spirit with a video-game twist.

The annual Homecoming parade once again returned to downtown Joplin, with community members lining the streets to cheer on the Lions.

Ryunosuke Fukuda and **Ropa Nyakutya** were crowned Homecoming King and Queen during the annual Homecoming game vs. Lincoln.

Nyakutya, a senior biochemistry major from Zimbabwe, was sponsored by International Club. She is a member of International Club, MOSO Dance Club, Campus Activities Board, the Black Student Alliance, Women in Science, and Caduceus Club. Fukuda, a sophomore international studies major from Japan, was also sponsored by International Club.

The Alumni Association also announced the Distinguished Alumnus/Alumna awards for 2022, as well as the Outstanding Family award.

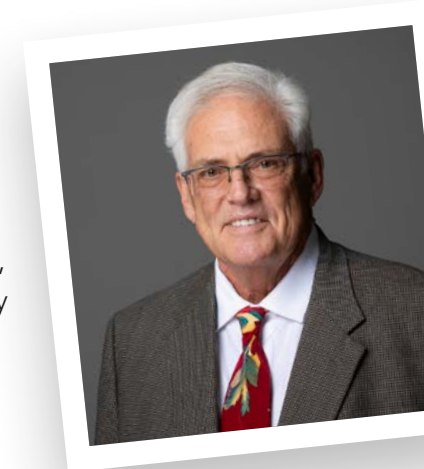
DR. STEVE GILBRETH, '88
2022 DISTINGUISHED ALUMNUS

Dr. Steve Gilbreth graduated from Missouri Southern in 1988 with a BSE in English Education. He then went on to earn an MA in Educational Leadership, and then his Ed.S. and Ed.D. in Educational Leadership. His career as an educator has spanned more than 25 years in the Joplin School District, where he started as an English and technology teacher at North Middle School in 1997. He then became the assistant principal at North Middle School in 2002, principal at South Middle School in 2005, and then assistant superintendent for learning services for the Joplin School District in 2017. He now serves as the principal of Joplin High School.



DR. STEPHEN MILLER, '69
2022 DISTINGUISHED ALUMNUS

Dr. Stephen Miller is a 1969 graduate of Missouri Southern. He earned his Doctor of Osteopathy degree from Kansas City College of Osteopathic Medicine in 1976. He earned the Navy Commendation Medal in 1981 and has been on staff at Coffeyville Regional Medical Center since 1987. He has delivered more than 20,000 babies and counting.





DR. AMBER ROSE PHIPPS, '04
2022 OUTSTANDING
ALUMNA

Dr. Amber Rose Phipps is a 2004 graduate of MSSU, earning her BS in health promotion and wellness. She was a four-year member of the women's soccer team. After graduating, she earned her MBA and her DBA. She is a paratrooper in the United States Army, commissioned Medical Service Corps officer, and holds the rank of major. She returned from her most recent combat deployment in Afghanistan in 2020 and is currently the vice president of quality and safety at Children's Hospital and Medical Center in Omaha, Neb.

SKIP HALE, '76, & FAMILY
2022 OUTSTANDING FAMILY

The recipient of the 2022 Outstanding Family Award is the family of Skip and Kandi Hale. Skip is a 1976 graduate of Missouri Southern. He graduated with a BSBA in marketing and management. He and his wife, Kandi, have three children: Cassie, Cori, & KW. Cassie is a 2009 graduate of MSSU's Dental Hygiene program, and KW is currently a student at MSSU. Cori is the Associate Athletics Director at MSSU. Skip was inducted into the MSSU Athletics Hall of Fame in 1998. He and his family continue to be dedicated supporters of the university.



MSSU welcomes new Director of Alumni and Donor Relations

The university has welcomed a familiar face to serve as the new Director of Alumni and Donor Relations.

Melissa Holt-Nance graduated from Missouri Southern in 2011 with a degree in public relations/mass communication and a minor in vocal music. Prior to returning to her alma mater, she served in a variety of roles – including student life specialist and admissions recruiter – at Labette Community College in Parsons, Kan.

Holt-Nance began her new role in May, shortly before Spring 2022 commencement ceremonies. One of her first duties was working with Golden Grads – those who

graduated 50 years ago or more – who were invited to attend the ceremony.

"I really enjoyed getting to hear their stories about their time here or at Joplin Junior College," she said.

She said she hopes to keep fostering connections with MSSU graduates and to make sure future alumni know the importance of remaining involved with MSSU.

"My goal is to create an even more engaged local alumni base," Holt-Nance said. "I also want to formulate that connection with younger alumni and students so they feel a strong connection with us and carry it on after they graduate."

REACHING THE *FINISH LINE*

New Adult Degree Completion program designed to meet the needs of students, workforce

Beverly Lescard had some unfinished business.

Having retired after 40 years in the banking field and spending the last 11 years focusing on her family, the 70-year-old Siloam Springs resident decided to return to Missouri Southern to finish her degree.

"I attended Missouri Southern from 1969-72 and studied business, which has always been my niche," Lescard said. "In the summer of 1972, my husband returned from the Navy and we got married. I started working at Arkansas State Bank in Siloam Springs."

Her interest in returning to complete her degree came at the perfect time, with the fall launch of the new Adult Degree Completion (ADC) program at MSSU.

The program is designed to advance the career readiness of adults who wish to finish their bachelor's degree or further their skills by obtaining their master's. It will offer affordable and tailored degrees and certifications, and will meet local workforce needs by offering accelerated and flexible opportunities for employee advancement.

Josh DeTar, a Joplin native and city council member who attended Missouri Southern before launching a career as a financial advisor, started working to finish his degree in October.

"Going back to school to finish my degree is something I've been wanting to do," he said. "Not finishing has been one of my regrets in life, and I want to show my kids that it's important."

"When I ran for Joplin City Council, I always tried to deflect the question about my education," he said. "Back then, I didn't have the patience (to finish). The eight-week, online classes offered by this program

works really well for me."

Both Lescard and DeTar bring years of experience that can be converted into academic credits – one of the benefits of the new ADC program.

"Students can apply the knowledge they have gained from work and life experiences toward completion of their degree," said Dr. Will Mountz, director of adult degree completion.

The ADC program was recently approved for a \$30,000 Institutional Workforce Enhancement grant by the Missouri Scholarship and Loan Foundation, which Mountz said will help to further assist adult learners.

"This grant will go toward helping us launch this program and for things like technology that students can come in to use to do assignments or check out," he said.

For Lescard, checking off the "bucket-list" item of earning her bachelor's degree has been made more easily obtainable through the ADC program. And coming back to Missouri Southern to do it felt right, she said.

"If I hadn't attended Missouri Southern and gotten that solid foundation, I never would have had the opportunities I did in banking," she said.



'TAKING THE 30,000-FOOT VIEW'

JPD Capt. Nick Jimenez graduates from intensive Administrative Officers Course

Capt. Nick Jimenez leads the way through the Joplin Police Department, taking several turns until reaching his office.

Today, he serves as the head of the department's investigations bureau. But the first time he sat in the very same office was in the seat reserved for visitors. He was a Missouri Southern State University student there to talk to the captain about a potential internship.

Then a junior criminal justice major, he welcomed the opportunity to see firsthand how the department operates.

"You have a different idea of what police work is until seeing the day-to-day operations of a department," Jimenez said. "It was a great experience and after I finished, I was approached to see if I would be interested in applying to become a police officer."

He graduated from Missouri Southern's Law Enforcement Academy and joined the department in 2008. It marked the beginning of a long career with the JPD that found him serving in a variety of roles – including patrolman, field training officer, a member of the SWAT team, firearms instructor, and a K-9 officer.

In 2018, he received his bachelor of science degree in criminal justice, along with an associate's degree in law enforcement.

Now serving the department in an administrative role, he is seeing the JPD in a new light, having recently graduated from the 147th Administrative Officers Course offered by the Southern Police Institute (SPI) at the University of Louisville.

"Academically, it's the hardest thing I've ever done," Jimenez said. "It's a competitive application process and they accept just two classes a year. It's a 12-week, 480-hour program. You live on campus and eat, breathe and sleep administrative function theory."

"It's a master's level course and the majority of instructors all have their doctorates and are published researchers within the field of criminal justice."

The intensive course covered topics ranging from policing and investigative methods to the potential benefits of local research.

"One of the big lessons I took away from the SPI is the self-reflection ... to make sure your intentions are good

within your organization," he said. "Your job should be to ask, 'How can I serve the citizens of this community and make them feel safer and increase the public trust?' If the public cannot trust those entrusted to police them, then there's no way we can move forward with any other goal we have within the department."

"And anyone who serves in an administrative function needs to take that 30,000-foot view and make it relatable to the people out there doing the work. The real heroes in law enforcement are the officers you pass out there every day ... wearing a uniform and a badge, picking up the radio and saying, 'Send the next.' I'm so thankful for the great group of officers we have here within the JPD."

Jimenez said he feels proud to serve in a community that supports its police department. That was never more apparent than following a tragic shooting on March 8, which claimed the lives of Cpl. Benjamin Cooper and Officer Jake Reed. A third JPD member, officer Rick Hirshey, was seriously wounded.

"There were as many tears shed on Main Street (during the funeral processions) as there were by our officers," he said. "It was a sign of how much our community cares."

"Being with 44 other administrators from agencies all over the country – from Alaska to Florida – you heard about the relationships some communities have with their police departments. I think we're infinitely blessed."

Jimenez remains connected with his alma mater, serving as an adjunct instructor in the law enforcement academy, which is a Missouri POST (Peace Officer Standards & Training) licensed training center.

"Almost all of our officers come through Missouri Southern," he said. "The resources and expertise offered by the faculty is great, and our pedigree is excellent. You couldn't ask for a better recruiting tool than the personnel we have out there."



HONORING THEIR MEMORY

Scholarships established in honor of JPD Officers Cooper and Reed

Scholarship funds to honor two Joplin police officers who died in the line of duty earlier this year have been established at Missouri Southern.

In August, a check was presented to the Missouri Southern Foundation to create the scholarships in memory of Cpl. Benjamin Cooper and Officer Jake Reed. The two men lost their lives following a shooting on March 8. A third officer, Rick Hirshey, was wounded in the incident.

Cooper was a 2003 graduate of MSSU's Law Enforcement Academy. Reed graduated from the academy and earned his bachelor's of science in criminal justice administration in 2017. Hirshey, graduated from the academy in 1994.

The funds were raised during Bright Futures' annual Guns 'n' Hoses basketball game, during which teams from the Joplin Police Department and Joplin Fire Department go head to head.

"Five years ago, we held the first Guns 'n' Hoses game and in that time we've raised a little over \$50,000," said Larry Warren, board president of Bright Futures. "This year we wanted to do something to give back. We decided as a group we wanted to start a scholarship fund under each officer's name. It will be for Joplin High School students wishing to go

to Missouri Southern to study law enforcement."

Dr. Tim Wilson, associate professor and chair of the Criminal Justice Department at MSSU, said he had the pleasure of knowing both men.

"Ben and I went to the same high school together and later worked the same shift at the Joplin Police Department," Wilson said. "Jake was one of the growing number of students who began his academic career in criminal justice here at Missouri Southern and then finished at the Law Enforcement Academy. I remember teaching (him) how to administer the field sobriety test and enjoyed how seriously he took it and every aspect of learning the job."

He said that faculty members in the Criminal Justice Department will gather at the end of the upcoming academic year to review the list of names being considered for the two scholarships.

Primary donors for other scholarships in the officers' names include Ashley Home Store, Arvest Foundation, Jimmie Ray and Carol Cignetti, the Gaskill Memorial Trust and the family of Jake Reed. People wishing to make a gift in honor of the fallen officers should contact the Office of Development at 417-625-3104 or Greim-K@mssu.edu.



One step at a time

Director hopes to grow ACACIA Center services to area families

BY AMANTHA DAVIS, SENIOR, ENGLISH MAJOR

Having planted the seeds to provide applied behavior analysis (ABA) to the community, the ACACIA Center at Missouri Southern will eventually branch out even further.

"We want this program to be as accessible to as many people as possible," said Dr. Ayla Schmick, assistant professor of psychology and director of the center.

Located in the Gene Taylor Education building, it opened in 2021 following renovations made to the space formerly occupied by the university's Child Development Center. It's named for its key values: Acceptance, Community, Academics, Commitment, Inclusivity and Advocacy.

The mission is to provide services and resources to families of individuals with autism spectrum disorder and beyond, including parent/caregiver consultation, addressing social and emotional growth, and assistance with vocational and daily living skills.

"We look at human behavior as a whole and how we can understand and use our science to help people who are on and off the spectrum, with no age range or required diagnosis limitations," said Schmick. "We're here to help everyone and anyone."

The ACACIA Center works primarily with local families and individuals in the Joplin area, with plans to reach out to more people.

The center also provides an invaluable education experience for MSSU students interested in ABA. Students can apply what they have learned in the classroom,

observe, and address different behaviors, and learn how to respond to a variety of different scenarios.

Chantelle Single, a senior elementary education major, is a student worker in the center. As part of her job, she is able to get hands-on experience working with clients.

"I do a lot of Discrete Trial Teaching (DTT), helping learners with reading and identifying different emotions and how to deal with them," she said. "I didn't think I would be interested in going into this field. But after getting my ABA and autism certificates from MSSU and working here, I plan on getting my master's in ABA because my experience here has been so good."

Schmick said she has plans to expand the center's offerings beyond what is available now.

"We are in the process of becoming an approved insurance provider, as well as developing other resources for our community so we can help more people on a larger scope," Schmick said. "Eventually I would like to have scholarships available for families, but we're taking this one step at a time."





STAYING IN THE MOMENT

Heath Holt, '96, caddying for player on the LIV Golf tour

Having stopped in the pro shop to pick up keys for a golf cart, Heath Holt is heading for the door when he's stopped by another member of the Millwood Golf and Racket Club in Ozark, Mo.

"I just saw you on TV the other day," the man says.

"Did the camera add 10 pounds?" Holt replies with a laugh. "I hope not."

A '96 graduate of Missouri Southern who was a member of the golf team as a student, Holt has made a living as a caddy for professional golfers for the last 25 years. He's currently caddying for South African golfer Charl Schwartzel on the LIV Golf Invitational Series.

In June, Schwartzel won the first LIV event at the Centurion Club near London, collecting \$4.75 million in what was the largest purse in the history of the sport.

'HE'LL TAKE IT'

Holt first picked up a golf club at the age of 8.

"I was hooked from the very beginning," he says. "I took lessons at a driving range. I really liked it, and I've always liked being outside as much as possible."

He was awarded a scholarship to play for Missouri Southern by the late Bill Cox, former golf coach, and says he made lifelong friends on the team.

"We had a great group of guys on the team. I won a tournament but never did anything that would blow anyone's hair back. But it was a great experience. A lot of it was just spending time together on the road and growing up that way."

He says several of his teammates landed caddying gigs the summer after they graduated.

"We all jumped in my car after graduation and worked the rest of the Nike Tour back then," he says. "A friend later called me out of the blue and asked if I'd like to caddy on the PGA Tour starting the following year."

"I had interviewed for one job after I graduated ... an insurance company in Springfield. I called the guy up and told him I had the opportunity to caddy for the PGA and he told me, 'You should take it. You've got the rest of your life to sell insurance.'"

'A TRUE PROFESSIONAL'

Over the years, Holt has worked with nearly 30 professional golfers. The role of a caddy is different for each one.

"It's not set in stone what you do," says Holt. "For a lot of them you do yardage, talk about wind direction, club selection and whether you should take on risk – like taking on a Par 5 in two. You wear a lot of hats as a caddy."

"I've always heard that golf is 90 percent mental, and that's really true at the top level. You learn strategy – when to take a risk and when not to – and the smaller nuances of the game. You learn to stay in the moment."

His pairing with Schwartzel came from the recommendation of a friend who was working with the golfer on his putting game.

"Charl was between caddies at the time, and I was told I should throw my name in the hat," says Holt. "A few weeks went by, and I got an opportunity to meet with Charl and here we are."

"He is great ... a true professional. He saw an opportunity with the LIV league and decided joining was the best thing for him and his family. Getting a win right away was a blessing for my family, too."

The Saudi-backed LIV series has not been without controversy, with groups criticizing Saudi Arabia's human-rights violations, and the PGA Tour banning players for participating in events. But Holt says his commitment is to his player in the game.

"Politics in sports is a big no-no," he says. "I try not to focus on it."

Living in Springfield, he says he appreciates the spacing of the LIV events, which allows him to be home more and spend time with his family ... and out on the golf course.

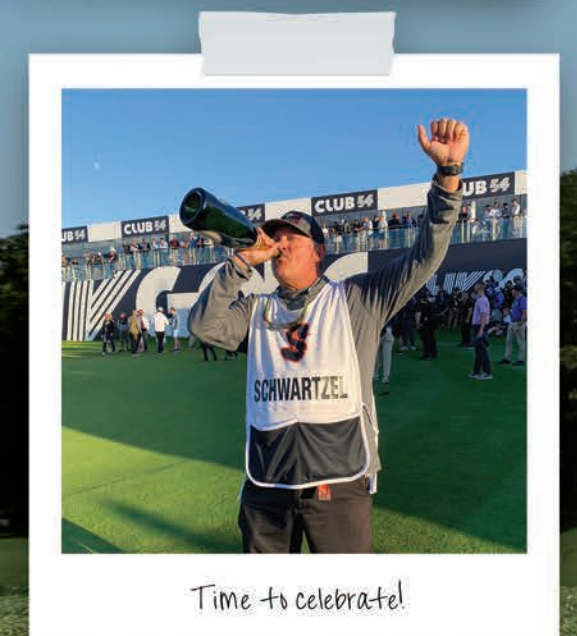
"Being around world-class players makes you step up your own game," he says. "But to be honest, when I play it's to have fun, a few laughs with friends and just enjoy the game."



What do you think?



We did it!



Time to celebrate!

VIRTUALLY ASSURED

Donor funding used to create VR simulation lab for Nursing Department



The hospital room isn't terribly big, with not a lot a lot of space for senior nursing student Sadie Ferguson to move around.

Her patient is lying on the hospital bed waiting for an examination. He's a Type 2 diabetic and is seeking treatment for an ulcer on his left leg, which has been propped up on a stack of pillows.

Dr. Lisa Beals encourages Ferguson explore the room before doing anything else.

"Open the doors," she says, asking her student to see what supplies are available in the med cart. "Grab that bottle of sterile water."

There's a peal of laughter from the other nursing students watching as Ferguson reaches for the patient and accidentally removes his hospital gown, which then completely disappears from view.

"Where did it go?" Ferguson asks, unable to hold back her own laughter as she peers around the room for the missing garment.

It's no harm, no foul where the patient's dignity is concerned, given that he only exists in a virtual

environment. The students gathered are here for a sneak peek at the VR technology that is about to be incorporated into the Nursing Department's curriculum.

The new virtual reality simulation lab – located on the third floor of the Julio S. León Health Sciences Center – was made possible by a substantial monetary gift from an anonymous donor. The gift was made with the intent to use innovative technology within the department to enhance the student learning experience.

The department has transformed a classroom into a dedicated space for VR simulation, purchasing four sets of Oculus headsets and controllers, as well as a large SMART Board and access to Evolve: Elsevier – an online healthcare-education service that offers a library of more than 200 VR scenarios.

"The scenarios run the gamut from the foundational principles of nursing – such as putting on personal protective equipment – all the way up to how to deal with patients during a pandemic," says Beals, chair of the Nursing Department. "It includes clinical care, working in the med-surg area, caring for patients who have a mental-health issue, and how to effectively communicate with patients."

"The VR simulations are centered on building the students' cognitive skills ... what we call 'Thinking like a nurse.' It's part of a tiered approach to our new curriculum. Students can learn the theory of why we do the things we do in the classroom, then experience it in virtual reality, then in our Simulation Center for Interdisciplinary Studies, and finally in an actual clinical setting."

'ANOTHER LEVEL OF SIMULATION'

In a 2020 study published in the Journal of Medical Internet Research entitled "Effectiveness of Virtual Reality in Nursing Education," researchers concluded that while further rigorous studies are needed, there are benefits to incorporating the technology in the classroom.



"As VR technology advances and becomes increasingly affordable, nursing education is being transformed," the authors state. "VR simulations can give nursing students the opportunity to practice skills in a safe environment without risk to patients."

Caleb Lewis, director of the Simulation Center for Interdisciplinary Education – a fully functioning lab that simulates a hospital environment with state-of-the-art human patient simulators – says virtual reality is yet another way for students to learn the cognitive skills required in the nursing field.

"Virtual reality is just another level of simulation," says Lewis. "In the last two or three years, VR technology has caught up with medical education."

The technology is not far off from the type of gaming software some students have been using for years.

"This (technology) is from their generation," Lewis says. "Every part of it is realistic. It can take them from a patient room to a (newborn intensive care unit) ... settings we can't always reproduce here."

Caleb Wolf, a senior nursing major, immediately took to the virtual environment. Pulling the Oculus headset over his eyes, he began exploring from a starting point in a virtual hospital lobby.

"I've been using an Oculus for about four years, mostly for gaming," he says.

While the scenarios are not games, some of the mechanics of using the controls aren't that different, which made Wolf feel right at home.

"With this simulation, you're fairly stationary in a hospital setting rather than moving around through a big map," he says. "I'm a big advocate for virtual reality. It's very immersive."

Wolf says he's also a fan of the VR experience in that students can use tools such as the patients' facial expressions and answers to questions that aren't available when working with the physical patient simulators.

"It's hard for me to communicate with the mannequins," he says. "I'm personable and talking to people is one of my strong suits. It's harder to do with a mannequin. The immersion factor of virtual reality is going to be insane compared to traditional simulations."

BEST PRACTICES

Even students unaccustomed to the technology could immediately see its value.

"I'm excited for it," says senior nursing major Melody Xiong after spending a few minutes checking out the virtual environment. "The experience is very realistic and there's so much for us to do within the simulation."

Beals says the rollout of VR simulation this fall will take place in several of the clinical courses required for the nearly 50 students in the department's two nursing cohorts.

Students will be able to participate in the VR simulations independently or even in small groups, depending on the scenario. As they work, other students in the room will be able to watch actions unfold on the SMART board.

"Instructors will serve as moderators ... there is also canned text offered as patient responses," says Beals. "It can help students if they're not going down the right path. We can also let them make mistakes and then talk about what they did wrong during the debriefing."

Since virtual reality is still relatively new when it comes to nursing education, the department will be adapting to it as needed.

"Best practices are now starting to come out from the studies being done," Beals says. "Each person using VR will have a spotter in case they get vertigo. In nursing, self-care and resiliency are also important. There are great yoga and meditation apps included, so students could even use it for relaxation."

"This program and department have made tremendous strides over the past two years. The generous support from the university administration and Foundation donors have helped in moving innovative nursing education to the forefront of the BSN program."

THE NEXT GENERATION

Chilean student follows in her mom's footsteps at Missouri Southern

When Carolina Contreras arrived on the Missouri Southern campus in 2002, the exchange student from Chile wasn't sure what to expect.

What she found were new friends and the benefits of becoming engaged in campus life.

"It was a rich experience when I came here," said Carolina. "I met very nice people, like Stephanie."

Stephanie Goad – MSSU's senior coordinator of international recruitment and admissions – was at the time an international student advisor.

"I remember that Carolina went to all of our events," said Goad. "She was with a very active group of Chilean students who came here from a partner school in Santiago."

Goad said she later visited Chile and was shown around the city by Carolina and other students.

"I felt like we had a connection," she said. "Then, earlier this year, she contacted Missouri Southern and found out I was

still here. She asked if I remembered her and I said, 'I absolutely remember who you are!'"

Twenty years after her time as an international student, Carolina felt the university would be the perfect place to send her daughter, Maria, who was seeking her own study abroad experience.

"It is very difficult to let our kids go somewhere far away," said Carolina, who said her time at MSSU led her to encourage Maria to give it a look.

After meeting with Goad via Zoom and learning more about the campus, Maria enrolled and arrived this fall as a student in the Intensive English Program ... almost exactly two decades after her mother.

"I know that (my mother) had so much fun here and had a good experience," said Maria. "People cared for my mom, so I feel safe here."

Goad said, to her knowledge, it marks the first time Missouri Southern has become home to a second-generation international student.

"It makes me feel really good to know Carolina would want to send her daughter here as well," she said.



Willis Potter, '07, appointed principal of his former high school in British Virgin Islands

Willis Potter came to Missouri Southern as a non-traditional student from the British Virgin Islands in 2004.

Today, he now serves as the principal of the high school he once attended, and frequently returns to the area to see family who still live here.

He was recently named principal of the Virgin Islands School of Technical Studies, and he credits his education at Missouri Southern with helping him prepare for a leadership role.

"The speech class I took here was a big deal for me," Potter says. "It helped me with personal interaction. You need that as a principal."

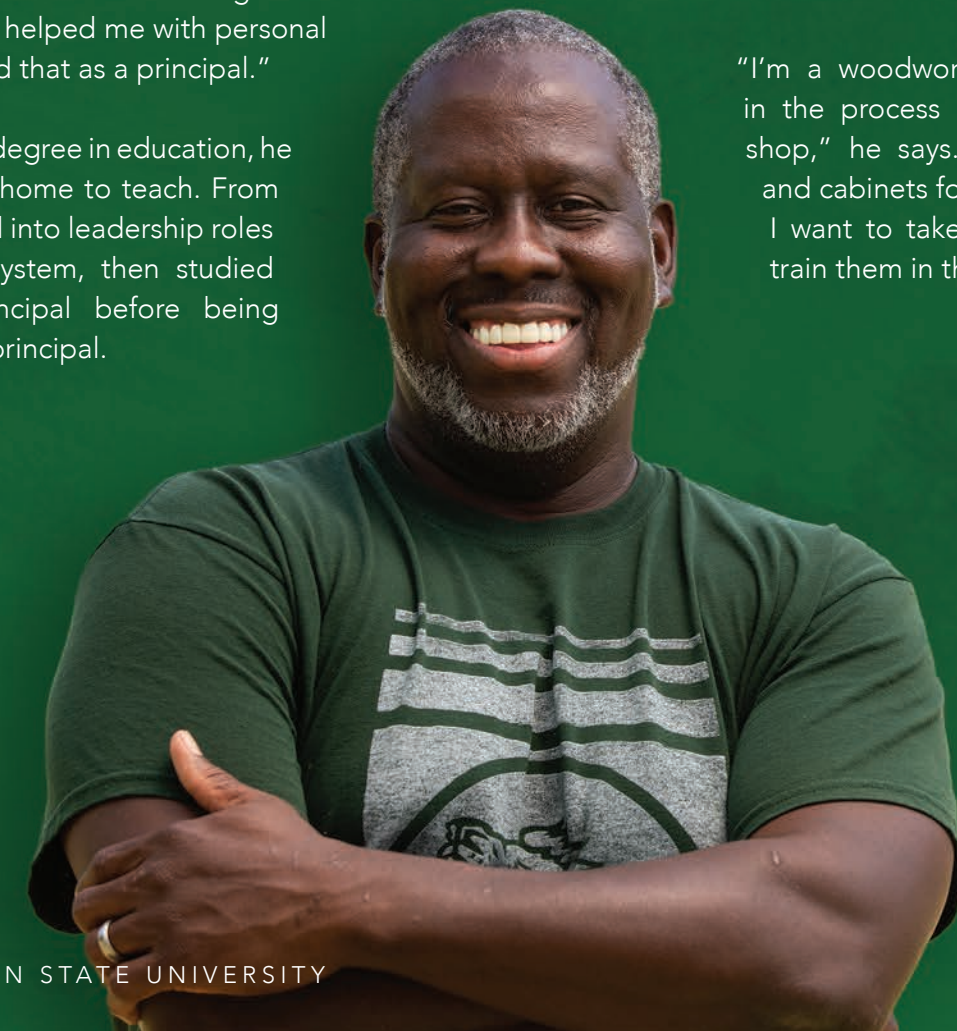
Having received his degree in education, he eventually returned home to teach. From there, he was moved into leadership roles within the school system, then studied under another principal before being appointed as head principal.

"I never sought out a leadership role," says Potter. "But I was always put in leadership positions. The hardest part is the paperwork, but that comes with the territory."

While visiting Joplin in August, he helped pick up international students arriving at the airport, take them furniture shopping and get them settled in the residence halls. His own experience as an international student allowed him to talk about his time at MSSU and offer advice.

While retirement is still far down the road, Potter says he's looking forward to keeping busy after his career in education.

"I'm a woodworker by trade, and I'm in the process of setting up my own shop," he says. "I still build kitchens and cabinets for people. When I retire, I want to take young graduates and train them in this field."



'We were all just kids then'

Early Missouri Southern grads have been reuniting for three decades

It's a loaded question, for sure: Who here is the best golfer?

"Oh, here we go," someone sighs as several different names are thrown out.

"Are you getting paid overtime to have to listen to this?" another voice chimes in.

The group of eight men is gathered near the pool at Downstream Casino on a scorching hot June afternoon, soaking up the sun and enjoying cold beverages as they talk about their days together at Missouri Southern. The two days of golf and good times has become an annual tradition for this group of alumni, who all say they look forward to reconnecting with their friends every year.



"We've been doing this for 30 years," says Mike O'Shaughnessy, '72, who has been instrumental in organizing the reunions. "One of my best buddies, who is no longer here, he and I and Bryant Davis were going to the lake for golf outings. We just decided to start contacting more people we went to school with and start doing this in Joplin.

"We started this before Downstream was even built, and then it morphed into coming here. One guy told another guy, who told another guy ... one year we had 22 people here (for the reunion)."

While O'Shaughnessy played basketball, most of this group of friends played football. Nearly all of them went on to be educators and coaches.

"My first year of college was at Joplin Junior College, and my second year was the first at the new four-year school," says Davis, '72. "Ruben Berry was the coach then. There was a lot of comradery between us and we're still a brotherhood, so to speak.

"It's been a fun ride. Hopefully there will be 30 more (reunions)."

While it was their time at Missouri Southern that bonded them, each of the attendees have different stories of what brought them together.

"I'm originally from Chicago," says Jack Duda, '72. "(Coaching staff member) Tony Calwhite came and scouted me and got me down to Missouri Southern. These guys were all a little older than me and became kind of like my older brothers."

Larry Cameron, '74, joined the Marine Corps when he was 17 years old and spent his 18th year in Vietnam.

"I was 19 when I got out of the Marines and started playing football at Missouri Southern that July," he says. "We were all just kids then."

Kids, maybe, but these friends made memories that have lasted a lifetime.

"I don't think you could print it," says Mike Sexton, '72, with a laugh when asked about his favorite memories from those days. "But there were some good ones ... too many to think of just one."

"For us to still be around and still getting together is pretty amazing. I enjoy the cocktails with my boys, some golf, some grins and telling each other how good we were back then ... when we talk, we're better than we actually were."

Several of those attending the reunion – including Duda and Cameron – were members of the 1972 team, which scored a NAIA Division II national championship under Coach Jim Frazier.

Also attending this year were Gary Autry and Mike O'Rourke, both '72 graduates, and Dave Evans, '73.

O'Shaughnessy says a reason to keep the reunions going is to remember those who have passed.

"We've lost three of our buddies," he says. "The first was Jim Hoots, and then Denny Coffel and Bob Snodgrass. I love getting back to see all these guys because that time was such a big part of our lives, but we do this to honor (those we've lost), too."





COLLEGE OF ARTS & SCIENCES



University of Hradec Králové students
visiting from the Czech Republic



CZECH IT OUT!

Nearly 40 events featured during annual themed semester

A small, landlocked country in Central Europe took the spotlight this fall as Missouri Southern celebrated the Czech Semester.

The 26th themed semester – an annual tradition that began at Missouri Southern with the China Semester in 1997 – celebrated the country’s history, food, literature, music and film.

“The Czech Semester was made possible by close cooperation from our partner university there, the University of Hradec Králové,” said Dr. Chad Stebbins, director of the Institute of International Studies. “They supplied nine different faculty presenters and three other experts they had access to. We also exchanged faculty and students with them, as part of three joint classes we offered together in history, art, and international business.”

In all, there were 38 events that were open to the campus community.

Highlights included presentations on open-faced sandwiches and Czech goulash by Chef Tomas Slepicka, “Mozart in Prague” by Missouri Southern music professor Dr. Diana Allan, and Book Club sessions on Kafka’s “The Metamorphosis” and Milan Kundera’s “The Unbearable Lightness of Being.” The MSSU Wind Ensemble offered a concert celebrating the works of Czech composer Antonín Dvořák.

Stebbins said he was pleased with the reception to this fall’s events.

“We had record attendance at the 10 Czech films we presented on Tuesday evenings,” he said. “Although the Czech Republic is a small country, there seemed to be a considerable amount of interest in it.”

DEPARTMENT RECEIVES GRANT FOR PRESERVATION OF AFRICAN ART COLLECTION

The Department of Art & Design was recently awarded a \$10,000 grant from the National Endowment for the Humanities which will be used to help preserve the African Art Collection.

The grant application was filed in January and required an intensive amount of documentation, including a project overview, narrative and a bibliography.

“The NEH only funded about 40 percent of applicants this grant cycle,” said Dr. Christine Bentley, associate professor and director of the Spiva Art Gallery. “It speaks to the quality of what the staff is doing. I’m honored they recognized what we’re doing as something that’s significant.”

The collection includes more than 300 pieces of art and artifacts. It was assembled by a former assistant professor of art from pieces donated by John and Pam Finley in 1997, along with other contributors. In 2020 it was selected as one of 75 institutions in the United States to participate in the Collections Assessment for Preservation program.

“We recently moved the collection to a space on the first floor of Spiva Library,” Bentley said. “We’re looking at ensuring that they’re stored with the proper light and humidity, purchasing archival carrier trays, light monitors, display shelving and fabrics for draping that are good for the longevity of the collection.”



STUDENTS STAR IN NOSTALGIC 'HAPPY DAYS' PRODUCTION

The Performing Arts Department took audiences back to Milwaukee’s favorite hangout, Arnold’s Drive-In, with an October production of “Happy Days: The Musical.”

Richie Cunningham, The Fonz, Joanie, Chachi and the rest of the gang (including an appearance by Laverne and Shirley) were featured in the production written by series creator Gary Marshall. A donation of diner furniture and décor from the 1950s and ‘60s helped turn the Bud Walton Black Box Theater into an appropriately nostalgic setting.

The show features high-school senior Richie (senior theater performance major Austin Prince) enlisting The Fonz (sophomore theater performance major Logan Carnes) and others to stage a dance contest to raise enough money to save the diner from being razed by developers.

“We wanted to do something that was upbeat, family friendly and have a lot of audience appeal,” said Linda Unser, adjunct theater instructor who directed the production.

Musical director was by Kathy Nenadal, adjunct professor of piano; with choreography by Melissa Holt-Nance, director of alumni and donor relations, and senior vocal education major Kaitlyn Stockton.





COLLEGE OF BUSINESS, TECHNOLOGY & COMMUNICATION



LISA OLLIGES GREEN JOINS MISSOURI SOUTHERN AS GENERAL MANAGER OF KGCS

There's an approach to good storytelling that involves bringing things full circle – tying things up neatly in a way that corresponds with how the story began.

For Lisa Olliges Green, that kind of full-circle story also represents her career path, which has led to her being named general manager of KGCS, the campus television station at Missouri Southern.

A longtime broadcast journalist with KOAM, her role there has intersected with the university in a variety of ways.

"Years ago, I had an interesting experience here at Missouri Southern while working at KOAM," Olliges Green said. "I was host of 'Academic Challenge' on the campus television station. It was basically 'Jeopardy' for high-school students in the area.

"It was a great experience. I was able to host events in other states and at a national-level tournament. It helped me grow and hone my skills as a presenter."

Olliges Green got her start in broadcasting in St. Louis as an intern with KMOX-AM radio and for KSDK-TV. Her broadcast journalism career took her to KTVO in Kirksville, Mo., before joining KOAM, where she served in a variety of roles spanning 31 years.

She hopes to collaborate with other areas within the Communications Department to create well-rounded multimedia journalists.

"Today, you don't just work for a TV station," she said. "You don't just write for a newspaper. What you do is going to be shared online. I want students to be trained in all aspects, so their work can be shared in other multimedia formats.

"But while we have new technology, the heart of being a good journalist is to be a good storyteller. You need to listen when interviewing people so you can ask good questions. You need to be able to share someone's story without twisting it ... to be fair and interesting and creative, and to make sure their story comes full circle. That's what my career path has done. Being at Missouri Southern has brought me back to what I know and love."

MATH STUDENTS GATHER FOR ANNUAL SERIES OF COMPETITIONS

Everything was adding up this fall for the high-school Math League competition held at Missouri Southern.

"During our October meet held during Homecoming week, we had 17 schools participate – around 250 students – which is the largest group we've had in quite a few years," said Dr. Jean Coltharp, associate professor of mathematics and coordinator of the Math League program.

"Once a month, teams come to campus and take an individual test and then a team problem at the end. The tests are graded, and we hold an awards banquet in the spring."

Missouri Southern has hosted the area competition since 1967. Coltharp said it's an opportunity to celebrate students with an interest in mathematics.

"It also allows us to show them what the university has to offer, especially in our math program," she said. "Having an event during Homecoming week let them see a side of Southern they haven't necessarily experienced yet. It was the best day for them to visit campus."



STUDENT CHAPTER OF SHRM RECEIVES MERIT AWARD

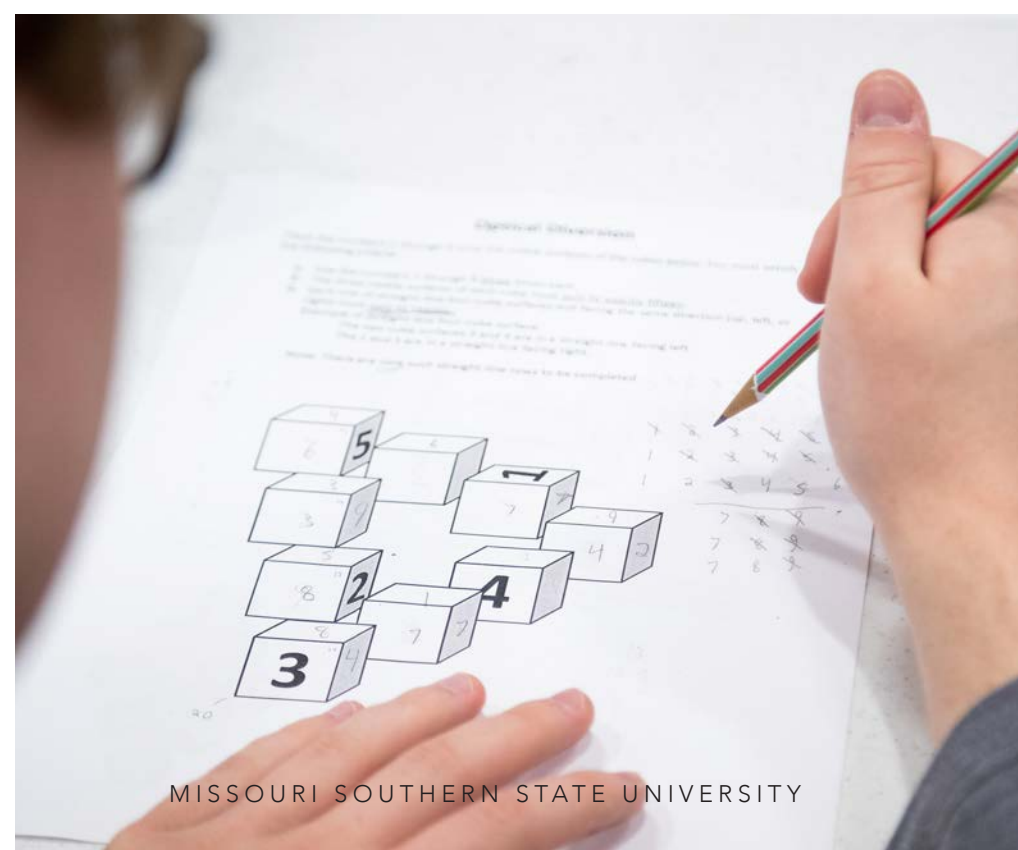
The Society for Human Resource Management (SHRM) student chapter at Missouri Southern has been awarded a 2021-22 Superior Merit Award for providing superior growth and development opportunities to its student members.

Dr. Sarah Holtzen, assistant professor of management, and Dr. Megan Douglas, associate professor of management, serve as co-advisors for the student chapter. Holtzen said she is proud of the dedicated members of the student chapter who had worked hard to make this organization what it is today.

"This honor is well-deserved. Our students here at the Plaster School of Business are insightful, professional, and committed to sharing their talents with the campus community and beyond," she said. "We are excited to see what the future holds for the MSSU student chapter of SHRM as it continues to grow."

The student chapter, which was created in the spring of 2021, is sponsored at the professional level by the Tri-State Human Resources Association and has engaged in a variety of activities aimed at campus, community, and professional development since it was created.

The current executive officers – all senior human resource management majors – are: Lakyn Shallenburger, Carl Junction, Mo. (president); Hallie Turner, Baxter Springs, Kan. (vice president); Megan Staggs, Webb City, Mo. (treasurer); and Hailey Hauck, senior, O'Fallon, Mo. (secretary).





COLLEGE OF HEALTH, LIFE SCIENCE & EDUCATION



'A SEAMLESS PATHWAY'

Missouri Southern partners with Crowder for '2+2'

A recent signing ceremony formally cemented a new "2+2" partnership between the teacher-education programs at Missouri Southern and Crowder College.

The agreement is designed to create a seamless pathway for Crowder students to complete their certification at Missouri Southern, said Dr. Lisa Toms, provost/vice president of Academic Affairs. Students will complete their two years of study at Crowder, then transfer to complete their certification at MSSU.

"With the shortage of teachers across the nation, this agreement is vital not only to our region and our state, but to our country," said Toms.

The education certifications available include:

- Elementary (Grades 1-6) and Early Childhood (Birth-Grade 3)
- Elementary (1-6) and Special Education (K-12)

- Elementary (1-6) and English Language Learner (K-12)
- Middle School (5-9) in English, Math, Science or Social Studies
- Secondary (9-12) in Business, Social Science (History Emphasis), or Social Science (International and Political Affairs Emphasis)
- Physical Education (K-12)
- Spanish (K-12)

An elementary education "2+2" program will also be available online for those who are currently working in a school district.

"We've had a longstanding relationship with Crowder College," said Dr. Jeri Goswick, assistant professor and chair of MSSU's Teacher Education Department. "Most of our transfer students are from Crowder, so this just made sense."

DENTAL HYGIENE PROGRAM RECEIVES GRANT FUNDING

The Dental Hygiene Department has received a teledentistry grant that will expand the services offered to rural students and the elderly.

The \$20,000 grant was awarded by the Missouri Department of Health and Senior Services, said Jill Pyle, department chair.

"In the past, we've provided sealants for students in second and sixth grades," Pyle said. "When we go back to Sarcoxie this year, we'll be seeing 232 students in kindergarten through sixth grades. We'll also be going to Avilla and Jasper for sealant retention checks.

"The main aspect of the grant is teledentistry. The dentist won't be with us, so we'll do the screening, take pictures and upload them online for the dentist at KCU to review and prescribe the sealant if needed. We'll also offer an oral-hygiene station with toothbrush and flossing instruction."

State grant funding from the previous year allowed the program to purchase additional portable dental units, bringing the total number to six. The units include a chair, stool, light, a suction component and power source.

A primary goal for the program is working toward being able to accept Medicaid payment.

"The whole point is to be able to sustain the funding after the grant is completed ... to be able to offer these services and be reimbursed for the cost of the product," said Pyle.



PHOTO CREDIT:
Sadie Maples,
senior BFA studio art major

SYMPOSIUM EXPLORES RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN ART AND MEDICINE

The Department of Biology and Environmental Health paired with the Department of Art and Design to present the inaugural Artful Medicine Symposium on Nov. 18.

Those attending had the opportunity to hear from medical and art professionals as they discussed the relationship of art and the humanities with medicine. The keynote address – "Art-Based Curriculum in Medical Education" – was presented by Dr. Shoen Kruse, vice provost of academic affairs and integrated learning at Texas Tech University Health Sciences Center.

A series of hands-on workshops allowed participants to practice fine motor skills in a variety of media, including ceramics, fibers, drawing and more. Students were able to share the results of scientific and creative research in poster and model exhibit. The Caduceus Club also offered a juried creative and scientific research competition.

"The Artful Medicine Symposium was developed as a way of formally addressing how art and medicine come together to enhance humanity," said Dr. Alla Barry, professor of biology and environmental health.

"It also has an education component to help our student clinicians relate better to patients, make better clinical diagnoses, and ultimately become better health-care providers."

LION ATHLETICS



'IT REQUIRED THE DOORS BE OPEN'

FIFTIETH ANNIVERSARY OF TITLE IX OBSERVED THIS FALL

Opportunity – it's a big word that carries a lot of meaning.

Passed in 1972, Title IX helped give the opportunity to girls and women to have the same access that boys and men have always had.

But Title IX is not just about athletics. It provided opportunities and access in many areas where they had previously been denied, which has led to the development of many exceptional leaders.

In September, Missouri Southern hosted a panel discussion to honor and bring more recognition to the historic law on its 50th anniversary.

Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972 prohibits sex-based discrimination in any school or any education program that receives funding from the federal government. It routinely has been linked with athletics, but it's much more than that. It was, and always has been, about access to educational programs.

"Title IX did more than open doors to access for women – it required the doors be open," said Sallie Beard, a former coach

and athletics director at MSSU. "And that women be admitted through that door in terms of any educational pursuit they wanted to follow. We see that in our culture today – look at how many women are in the workforce at the professional level."

Beard said Title IX wasn't about education itself, but it was about what that education would lead to when the doors were opened.

Dr. Pat Lipira coached the Lions to Missouri Southern's only NCAA Team National Championship, winning the softball title in 1992.

"It gave you opportunity, not guarantee," she said. "It gave you opportunity to make the team or get the job, and that didn't mean you were going to get either, but you had the opportunity to apply, and I think that's important."

Lipira said Title IX, and the access it granted, eliminated the "because you're a girl" excuse she had heard growing up when she wasn't given a chance to play baseball or do other things her brother and other males got to do.

But Title IX didn't just affect women. It was profound in so many ways. It affected men that had daughters and pushed them to realize what it was like before. Boys that grew up in that era became fathers of daughters this bill would also affect.

Missouri Southern associate head football coach Matt Rahl is a MSSU graduate and said his life has been influenced by so many great people.

"As I reflect on my time as a student at MSSU, I am very blessed to have had the experience that I had," Rahl said. "My time was so heavily influenced by people like Sallie Beard, Pat Lipira, Patty Vavra and so many others that without Title IX, may not have been in the position to have that influence."

Title IX also led to a push of STEM (science, technology, engineering, and mathematics) access for young girls who may not have pursued careers in those fields. It allowed young women to do things they may have only dreamed of previously.

"Title IX gave me the opportunity to prove myself and I feel like I did that," Beard said. "I was given the opportunity to sit on committees within the conference and nationally. Prior to Title IX, that wouldn't have happened. As a result, my career gave me opportunities that I would never imagine, including sitting on the Management Council of the NCAA, which led to the opportunity to work with the Office of Civil Rights and help draft language which would be added to Title IX."

Vavra was both a student-athlete at MSSU, as well as a track and field coach. She said Title IX had a profound influence on her career, her lifelong friendships, and her ability to deal with situations outside of athletics.

"It gave me an opportunity to enjoy a career that I loved for a lifetime that prior to it wouldn't have been an option," she said.



Celebrating
50 YEARS
OF TITLE IX



'A RELENTLESS, AGGRESSIVE EFFORT'

NATIONAL CHAMPIONSHIP TEAM REUNITES FOR HOMECOMING

The year was 1972, and the Lions were undefeated – going 12-0 for the season, which included a win at NCAA Division I Nevada-Las Vegas and the NAIA Division II Football National Championship.

Five decades later, team members and their coach reunited as part of the 2022 Homecoming celebration.

The team, coached by MSSU Hall of Famer Jim Frazier, is enshrined in the Missouri Sports Hall of Fame, as well as the MSSU Athletics Hall of Fame. Five Lions were named All-American that year – Terron Jackson, Jack Varns, Barry Korner, Terry Starks and Jack Duda.



Seven members of the team (Kerry Anders, Bernie Busken, David Evans, Ray Harding, Ken Howard, Jackson, Lydell Williams) are part of the MSSU Athletics Hall of Fame as individuals, as well.

That team started the season with a drubbing of Fort Hays State on the road, where a 94-yard kickoff return by Williams set the tone for the rest of the season.

"That was the first time (Williams) touched the ball that year and it went 94 yards," said Frazier. "That was an exciting event, and our sideline was bonkers because Missouri Southern had never seen that kind of speed. We tried to recruit speed [Anders, Williams, Busken], and

we brought in speed with those recruits. That was a big part of our success and we just kind of grew from there."

The Lions then went on to host Southeast Missouri where a fumble return for a touchdown lifted the Lions over SEMO. From there, Southern defeated the College of Emporia 33-7, Missouri-Rolla 39-7 and went into the matchup with UNLV undefeated at 4-0.

The Lions were 10-0 heading into the playoffs that year and faced off with Doane (Neb.) in the NAIA National Semifinal game. Southern won that matchup 24-6 after allowing an opening kickoff to Doane and then shutting out their opponent the rest of the game.

In the National Championship game played in Joplin at Junge Field, the Lions matched up with Northwestern College of Iowa. Southern scored twice late in the fourth quarter to seal the Title. Trailing 14-13, the Lions forced a punt from inside the redzone and the snap was mishandled with Sam Kealoha, Jr. falling on the ball in the endzone with 1:28 left to put the Lions up for good.

"That, to me, was symbolic of our football team," Frazier said of his team's spirit and never-give-up attitude. "We had a relentless, aggressive effort and faced adversity all season long and that particular game was no different than our whole season."

IN THE SPOTLIGHT

WOMEN'S BASKETBALL RANKED NO. 1

The Missouri Southern women's basketball program has been picked to win the league in both the coaches and media polls as announced in October by the Mid-American Intercollegiate Athletic Association.

The Lions finished 24-7 (19-3 in the MIAA conference) last season to claim a share of the regular season title with Fort Hays State before meeting the Tigers in the MIAA Tournament championship game. They also made their fourth appearance (and the first since the 1995-96 season) in program history at the NCAA Tournament.

This is the first time that the Lions have been selected first in the MIAA Preseason Polls after previously being picked as high as second in the 1994-95 season.

The team participated in an exhibition on Nov. 1 at Wichita State University, and began the season during the D2CCA Tip-Off Classic in Kansas City on Nov. 5.



KIMUTAI WINS SECOND SOUTHERN STAMPEDE

Junior Gideon Kimutai won his second career Southern Stampede during the 33rd annual event held in September.

The men's cross country team placed five runners in the Top 23 spots and the Lions took home the team title during the event held in September at the Tom Rutledge Cross Country Course.

Kimutai finished the 8k with a time of 23:27:21. Senior Ryan Riddle, last year's champion, was close behind in second place at 23:53:69.

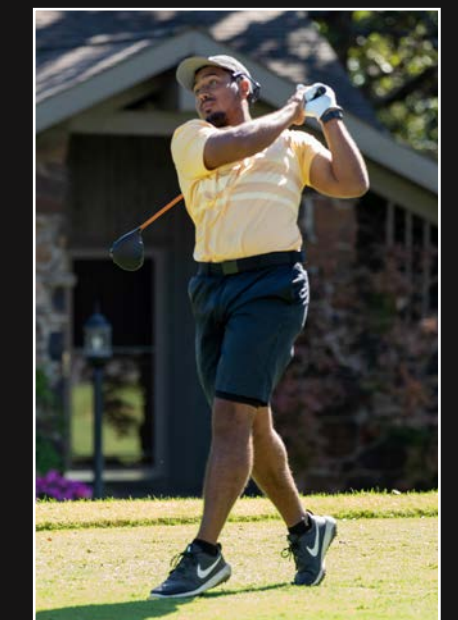


MCCRAE RECEIVES THREE MIAA RECOGNITIONS

Senior Tradgon McCrae was recently named MIAA Men's Golfer of the Week for the third time this season.

McCrae took home the individual title with a three round, three-under par 210, helping MSSU to a runner-up finish at the Holiday Inn Express Classic hosted by Missouri Western at St. Joseph Country Club last month. It marked his second individual championship this season, having also won at Northeastern State earlier in the season.

McCrae had seven birdies in the final 18 holes and had 16 birdies and an eagle over the course of 54 holes.



CLASS Notes

1970s

Linda (Goins) Reising, '78, recently received the Western Heritage Book Award for poetry and was a finalist for the Oklahoma Book Award for her third book of poetry, "Stone Roses."

1980s

Dana Frese, '84, is the president and CEO of Healthcare Services Group in Jefferson City, Mo.

1990s

John "Sam" Ellis, '90, is now the vice president/information technology and chief security officer for Southwest Power Pool in Little Rock, Ark.

Dr. Rafael Santiago, '91, is now the chief clinical director at Jordan Valley Community Health Center in Springfield, Mo.

Holley Goodnight, '96, is now the assistant superintendent for business for the Carthage R-9 School District in Carthage, Mo.

2000s

Brenden Gubera, '03, was named 2022 National High School Strength Coaches Association Missouri State Coach of the Year at Carl Junction R-1 Schools.

Sean Ritchie, '03, is the owner of Tatanka Transport and CFO of RV Parts USA in Mountain Home, Ark.

Kristen (Armilio) Niemeyer, '04, was selected as the Central Missouri High School Athletic Director of the Year.

Holly Robinson, '08, is the director of child development at Missouri State University in Springfield, Mo.

Brianna Volmer, '08, is the girls basketball head coach at Labette County High School in Altamont, Kan.

2010s

Whitney Mestelle, '16, is now the director of Equity at iMentor of New York, N.Y.

Jack Ginger, '17, is a data analyst at Cerner Corporation in Kansas City, Mo.

Ashly Ginger, '17, is the college and career coordinator at Fort Osage High School in Independence, Mo.

Jonathan Villanueva, '17, is a firefighter in Tulsa, Okla.

Karsten Villanueva, '18, is a digital marketing specialist at Tulsa Children's Museum in Tulsa, OK.

LET US KNOW WHAT'S GOING ON IN YOUR LIFE!

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Lion Cubs



JD, '08, and Erin Hergenrother welcomed Patrick Paddy on April 27, 2021.



Neil, '05, and **Shannan Hombs, '09**, welcomed Reese Harper on Aug. 6, 2021.



Chelsey, '19, and Landon Decker welcomed Maven Kay on April 25, 2022.



Kevin, '12, and **Carrie Burgi, '10**, welcomed Brynlee Jeane on June 16, 2022.

Marriages

Jonathan, '17, and **Karsten (Gilbert) Villanueva, '18**, were married on December 11, 2021.

Kinzer Lambert and **Kylee (Kaaihue), '20**, were married on April 23, 2022.

I N M E M O R I A M

DATES AS OF OCTOBER 11, 2022

ALUMNI

Walter Wheat, '52 | Jan. 21, 2022

Ronald Thomas, '63 | Feb. 19, 2022

Elaine (Dreier) Uppendahl, '97 | March 19, 2022

Delores "Dee" Hussong, '67 | March 28, 2022

Joel McDuffey, '08 | March 29, 2022

Karolyn Cleveland, '73 | April 1, 2022

Lucille Tisdale, '19 | April 4, 2022

Richard "Dick" Baker, '59 | April 6, 2022

Judith Finton, '88 | April 9, 2022

Perry Fleming, '91 | April 10, 2022

Deborah Newby-Richardson, '91 | April 12, 2022

Beverly Jones, '71 | April 15, 2022

Tom Boyles, '85 | April 19, 2022

Diane Fransca, '60 | April 26, 2022

Nancy Hailey | April 29, 2022

Debbie Pfeifly, '08 | May 7, 2022

Samuel "Sam" Crabtree | May 8, 2022

Sara Sale, '77 | May 10, 2022

Thomas DeMier, '65 | May 15, 2022

Robert Staats, '70 | May 18, 2022

Walt James, '54 | May 21, 2022

Lyndell Edwards, '88 | May 27, 2022

Nancy Young | May 27, 2022

Richard "Dick" White | May 27, 2022

Robert "Bob" Belcher, '86 | May 27, 2022

Denise (Thomas) Womble, '95 | May 30, 2022

Becky Anderson | June 2, 2022

Earl Western, '85 | June 3, 2022

Phyllis (Felkins) Spencer-Wallace, '47 | June 5, 2022

Jan Allton, '71 | June 6, 2022

Michael Eddy, '80 | June 7, 2022

Jimmie Bowman, '72 | June 9, 2022

Linda Mayo, '76 | June 14, 2022

Jack Davidson, '63 | June 15, 2022

Brandy Jackson, '20 | June 29, 2022

Johnie Bacon, '78 | July 1, 2022

Karalee "Kay" (Pearson) Miller, '64 | July 3, 2022

Lewis "Stan" Steenrod, '61 | July 6, 2022

Sue Ann (Gulick) Trimble, '68 | July 8, 2022

Jeff Long, '87 | July 13, 2022

Cynthia Ellard-Goff, '76 | July 15, 2022

Steven Kelley, '75 | July 15, 2022

John Wilkerson, '74 | July 19, 2022

Bill Livingston, '61 | July 20, 2022

John Johnston, '98 | July 20, 2022

Jill (Baird) Foulks, '00 | July 21, 2022

Paula (Wilton) Oakes, '07 | July 22, 2022

Barbara (Strobel) Armstrong, '71 | July 25, 2022

Glen Vansandt, '73 | July 30, 2022

Travis Denney, '07 | July 30, 2022

Rebecca Stephens, '01 | Aug. 7, 2022

H.B. Davis, '59 | Aug. 13, 2022

Beryl Brown, '61 | Aug. 14, 2022

Dawna "Renee" Buck, '99 | Aug. 19, 2022

Peter Prewitt, '88 | Aug. 22, 2022

Gary McKinney, '83 | Aug. 23, 2022

Judy (Schunk) Young, '79 | Aug. 23, 2022

Tobey (Tompkins) King, '14 | Aug. 26, 2022

Robert George, '73 | Aug. 26, 2022

Lavern (Lowder) Gilley, '73 | Aug. 28, 2022

John Drennan, '78 | Sept. 1, 2022

Joseph Endicott, '73 | Sept. 3, 2022

Beverly (Hawkins) Wisdom, '97 | Sept. 7, 2022

Dennis Caldwell, '82 | Sept. 9, 2022

Rickey Grove, '71 | Sept. 10, 2022

Stephen Buckingham, '73 | Sept. 14, 2022

Carmen (Wilson) Harris, '16 | Sept. 19, 2022

Charles "Chuck" Hixson, Jr., '77 | Sept. 20, 2022

Ronald Ferguson, '76 | Oct. 2, 2022

FRIENDS

Lesli Spenser | Feb. 14, 2022

William "Bill" Winton, II | Apr. 4, 2022

Michael "Mike" Gayman | Apr. 6, 2022

Dwayne Good | Apr. 10, 2022

Betty Goodall | Apr. 27, 2022

Hish Majzoub | May 3, 2022

Harry Cornell, Jr. | May 8, 2022

Phyllis "Jean" Taylor | May 25, 2022

Shirley Cornell | June 14, 2022

Clair Goodwin | July 24, 2022

Richard Copeland | Aug. 17, 2022

Steve Arnold | Sept. 9, 2022

Robert "Bob" Adams | Sept. 10, 2022

Richard "Dick" Day | Sept. 10, 2022

Donald Steele | Sept. 19, 2022

FACULTY, STAFF & RETIREES

Dr. Otto Borchert | May 4, 2022
Computer Science

Dr. Merrell Junkins | June 8, 2022
Psychology

Paige Neighbors | July 3, 2022
Bookstore

Robert Meeks | Aug. 26, 2022
Music Department

Valerie Carlisle | Sept. 22, 2022
Student Activities

Dr. Samuel "Sam" Rogers | Sept. 24, 2022
Teacher Education

George Greenlee | Sept. 24, 2022
English

Dr. Leland "Keith" Larimore | Sept. 25, 2022
Business

Dr. Henry "Bud" Morgan | Oct. 2, 2022
English

Hartford Tunnell | Oct. 8, 2022
Computer Science

STUDENTS

Jason Walker | Aug. 10, 2022

WHY I GIVE

CALEY HEDMAN, '11

The importance of giving back was something Caley Hedman says was instilled in her at a young age.

"It was always something I had watched my parents do, whether it was giving to the church, to the schools or other nonprofits," says Hedman, a CPA who graduated from Missouri Southern with a degree in accounting in 2011.

Hedman, who is now in her sixth consecutive year of giving, is a partner at Churchwell

Hedman Tax Group along with her father, Chris Churchwell, '82. She specializes in tax resolution, helping clients resolve IRS issues – a unique niche in her industry, she says.

"My father had a lot to do with (my becoming an accountant)," she says. "It was in 2008 when the market crashed, and I knew I needed to declare a major. I've known taxes and audits my whole life, so I decided to take an accounting class and see how it goes."

She quickly realized accounting was the direction she wanted to go in for her professional career and was happy with the education she received at MSSU.

"Without Missouri Southern, I wouldn't be where I am today," says Hedman. "It's a great university. I want to see continued growth and help future employees of ours as well. About half of our employees (at Churchwell Hedman) are graduates of Missouri Southern."

Five of her six siblings are also MSSU graduates, she says. Her annual giving has been focused on the Missouri Southern Foundation's Green & Gold Fund, which is used to meet monetary needs as they arise.

"If you're grateful for what you have, you should share your talents and share your resources," says Hedman. "That was something instilled in my life early on, and I want to keep that legacy going."

"If I can give back either financially, or with my talent, labor or time, that's valuable."



To discuss how you can support Missouri Southern, please call the MSSU Office of Development at 417-625-9615.



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