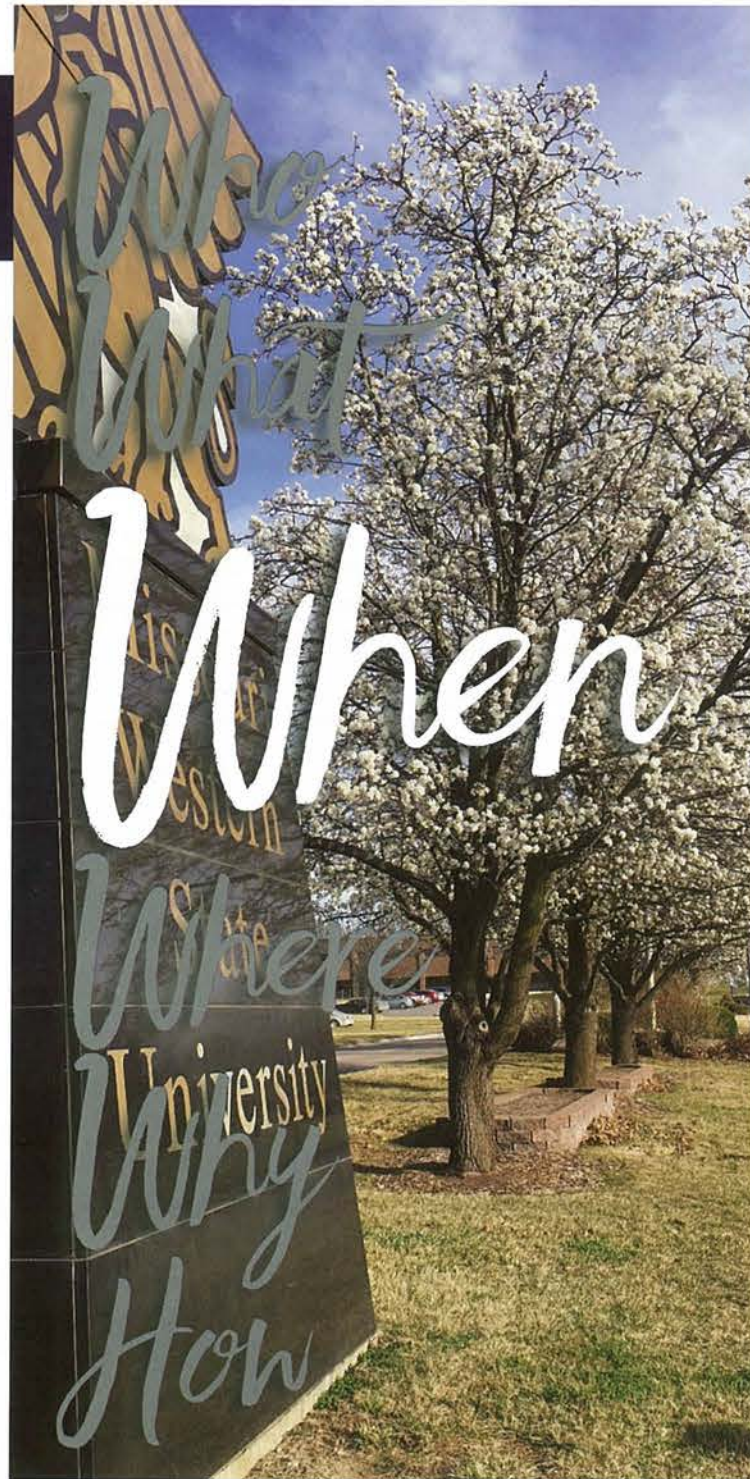


The Griffon

NEWS

WHEN

This yearbook may contain images, language, or other content that could be offensive to modern users. The content may be disturbing and offensive, but should be viewed within the context of that period. The material is being presented as part of a historical record and in no way reflects the values of Missouri Western State University.



The yearbook is a proud, longstanding tradition at Missouri Western State University. Barring a few wartime years, *The Griffon* has been an annual publication on campus. In 2015 we reflected back on the last hundred years. In 2016 we envisioned the next hundred years. In 2017 *The Griffon* is aiming to take a timeless look at our university.

When... this word can be used in a question or a statement. It can be used to describe the past, and the future. We have all declared to ourselves, "When I graduate, I'm going to..." We all can remember that one time, when... (It's inevitable.)

There is no doubt, as Griffons or as Alumni, that we will continue remembering the "whens," and looking forward to "when." Our lives are a series of when. Whether it's remembering when you tripped up the stairs to keep you a little more cautious, or getting inspiration from knowing that when you're walking across that stage, you've made it!

We looked back at all the years of *The Griffon* and we saw essentially the same book being made year after year. While each one had its own design style and writing, and each one had its own set of awards and accolades it had won, something felt familiar about them all. They all looked like they were made to put on a shelf in your office, not to be touched again until your kids started

thinking about college.

We took the 2017 inspiration from a number of places.

We started with the orientation; we decided to take the yearbook and put it on its side. We wanted it to have the look and feel of a coffee table book. The design doesn't lend itself to be forgotten about on a shelf.

Inside the book, we wanted dominant art, so the book could be browsed almost like a picture book. Simple, minimalistic design features that are easy on the eyes, and paired with fonts that were easy to read.

The content was gathered through the 2016-2017 school year, and organized by category, then softly broken up by photos submitted by Western's own students.

The Griffon isn't the staff's book, it's not the Editor's book, it's not Dr. Vartabedian's book... The 2017 Griffon belongs to each and every person who has been impacted by Missouri Western. Prospective, current and graduating students; alumni; administration; faculty; staff; families; the businesses, companies, and organizations who hire Western's graduates, and the list goes on and on.

When you look through it, we hope it brings you the passion and the pride that went into making it.

Bryant S. Scott



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*Letter
from the
President*

Dear Griffons,

I am quite pleased to provide an introductory letter to the 2016-2017 Griffon Yearbook.

Our yearbook has been a major point of pride for our university with a well-established tradition of excellence. So, I am very happy to be associated with it.

This year has been another eventful year for our university that will be aptly chronicled in our yearbook. We had a number of great academic and athletic moments on our campus.

Academically, we received a strong endorsement for full accreditation from our national Higher Learning Commission. This university is many things to many people, but we are first and foremost an academic institution. Such a full accreditation certainly speaks to the quality of our academic programs, our faculty/staff, and our students. Also, I am happy to say that we have received uniformly positive academic accreditations for all of our specific programs.

Regarding our intercollegiate athletic programs this, too, has been a banner year in both the competitive and academic areas. We have

demonstrated, once again, that our athletes are true student-athletes who excel in the classroom. Additionally, we have expanded our number of sports offered at Missouri Western from ten to now sixteen. Finally, we completed in 2016 new and renovated athletic facilities for which we are very proud: the new Spratt Stadium, a massive digital scoreboard, and the new Thomas Eagleton Indoor Swimming Pool Complex.



Politically, both at the state and national level, 2016 was a very interesting year with some unanticipated outcomes. Regardless of one's political leanings, I am always appreciative of our

students who are passionate about their beliefs and willing to stand by them. I am sure that some of this will be visually displayed in our excellent yearbook.

One last reflection: inclement, particularly icy, weather forced a postponement of our winter 2016 commencement. This is the first time in my long career—here and elsewhere—this has happened. The night of its cancellation, I received a record number of urgent requests to reschedule this event and as soon as possible. In each request, the message was essentially the same. Successfully graduating from Missouri Western was an important highlight of their life that necessitated a commencement celebration.

On that final note, I would like to celebrate the entire academic year 2016-2017. There is no better way to do just that than with our impressive Griffon Yearbook.

Please enjoy.

Robert A. Vartabedian, Ph.D.
President





PHOTO \ JASMINE TAYLOR DESIGN \ JONI THOMAS





The Griffons prepare to take the field before the homecoming game against Pittsburg State University. This was the Griffons first homecoming game in the newly renovated Spratt Stadium.

Homecoming

Missouri Western's homecoming events kicked off on Sunday, Oct 9. The theme was centered on the Olympics, which the homecoming committee chose last spring.

"Last spring semester, the Homecoming Committee held a retreat where they brainstormed ideas for themes," said Jessica Frogge, homecoming advisor. "They ultimately decided on Olympics, focused on summer Olympics, since it's an Olympic year. Events are based around summer Olympics."

The official theme, titled "Griffons Bring Home the Gold" set the tone for the week's events. The festivities imitated the summer games, including the opening ceremony (Western's annual bonfire) behind Baker

Fitness Center. A fireworks show followed the bonfire on the football field.

Other main events for the week included the pep rally on Friday, Oct. 14 and the Griffons' volleyball game against Emporia State. Throughout the game, the committee introduced the Homecoming Court and student groups performed short dance numbers. Going with the Olympic theme, the gold, silver and bronze Olympic court members were awarded in lieu of a king and queen. This was the first year the traditional king and queen roles were replaced with a more non-gendered, inclusive system.

The crazy Homecoming week finished with the football game against Pittsburg State on Saturday following the homecoming

parade and various tailgating festivities. The parade traveled through the downtown area. Students and community members tailgated in Lot H prior to the game at noon that day.

Throughout the week there were smaller events for students to attend, including a 5K, a dance party and relay race. These events gave students the opportunity to take part during any day of the weeklong celebration.

"We wanted students to attend all events," said Taylor Dowell, assistant director of homecoming. "Even if they're not participating we like them to be there for support and to cheer everyone on."

In February the new Homecoming committee will be back to the drawing board to deliver another fun Western tradition.

BLACK LIVES MATTER PROTEST

Four students in the stands of the Homecoming Game sat during the national anthem at the beginning of Missouri Western's Homecoming game against Pittsburg State. Two Mystics on the field also took a knee during the anthem, something that they have done before.

President of the Missouri Western chapter of the NAACP Alexis Williams said that sitting out the anthem was meant to bring attention to the Black Lives Matter movement and to make a statement against violence against African Americans.

"We did it because we have the right. The only thing that we are trying to say, in different forms, is 'stop killing us.' I think that's all it comes down to," Williams said. "We're not disrespecting anybody, not to the military. We are not anti-military. We just think that [sitting during] the national anthem is a good way to show that we support Black Lives Matter and we support pro-life. That's all we're saying. We deserve to live."

The sit-down demonstration was organized by members of NAACP, the Black Student Union (BSU), Phi Beta Sigma and some other students.

While the number of students who participated in sit-down protest was small, Williams said that there more people who planned to be involved, but the opening events began before they could get into Spratt Stadium.

"We got word that the school knew," Williams said. "We do have some Alphas down at the bottom of the hill who were going to participate. I think that's why they started earlier and why they did the national anthem earlier than they usually do because they weren't supposed to start until 2 p.m. and then they started at 1:50. I'm thinking that they did it on purpose. But the people who got here early, supported and participated, that's all we can ask."

However, according to Asst. Director of Public Relations and Marketing Kent Heier, the anthem on Saturday's game occurred on time.

"The anthem is always played approximately 6

minutes before the scheduled kickoff, following a schedule timeline recommended by the NCAA and MIAA. There are times when it may be a minute or two earlier or later than that, depending on other pre-game activities, but Athletics generally tries to stick to that schedule as strictly as possible, so that kick-off can take place at the scheduled time," Heier said.

"WE DID IT BECAUSE WE HAVE THE RIGHT..."

QUOTE \ ALEXIS WILLIAMS

President of the BSU Ravyn Highsmith also participated in sitting down during the national anthem and said that their demonstration sparked some reaction from the crowd.

"There were some people yelling to stand up, but that's three compared to the hundreds that were in the crowd," Highsmith said. "I think it does make me feel sad because it's almost a little pathetic to think that because we are sitting, it is affecting you that much that you have to scream out, 'stand up.' It's really not necessary at the end of the day. It does hurt my feelings, but feelings, I can get over those. I'm still going to sit down."

While this is the second sit-down protest to come to Missouri Western, don't expect it to be the last. Williams said they plan to continue sitting down during the national anthem at sporting events to call attention to the Black Lives Matter movement.

"I think it needs to be something that's ongoing," Williams said. "I think the more that we do it, the more questions get asked and the more you understand our movement while we're doing it..."

Both Williams and Highsmith encouraged understanding of the Black Lives Matter movement and having an open dialogue about the hardships people

of color in this country face.

"I think it's our job and our duty at this school, because ignorance is not an excuse," Williams said. "I think 'I don't know' is not a reasonable excuse. There are plenty of outlets for you to know."

"If you're curious, if you're naïve, if you're just plain ignorant about the movement, it's okay, but I rather you ask me the question than just make decisions on the basis of just your opinion if you do not understand the movement," Highsmith said. "If you do not want to deal with us, that's fine, but if you can at least say that you understand why we're sitting, then I'm okay with that. You do not have to agree with me, but I'm not going to stop at the end of the day."







Student debaters face off on the issues surrounding the 2016 presidential platforms. The mock debates represented the ideals of candidates Hillary Clinton and Donald Trump.

The election year, 2016, was full of more hot button issues and controversy than most elections in our lifetime.

To aid the next generation of voters here at Western, the Speech and Debate Club put on their own presidential debate to help students make

of what they need to know before stepping into a voting booth. These political debates, focus on the students at Western, and help combat the spirit of apathy when it comes to voting by showing students they can make a difference.

Having the debate stripped from all the

“I was not registered to vote and had no clue that I wasn’t, which stopped me from voting in the primaries.” Junior Cody Alders said. “Now I’m registered to vote which is good because this election is so important.”

Regardless of who wins this election, it’s

“NOW I’M REGISTERED TO VOTE WHICH IS GOOD BECAUSE THIS ELECTION IS SO IMPORTANT.”

QUOTE \ \ CODY ALDERS

informed decisions at this year’s polls.

Even though Donald Trump and Hillary Clinton were not present, their platforms were well represented and argued by two of its members.

“It is a good thing for students who are not interested in politics. If they have no interest, then they will do no research nor will they watch any of the debates on TV in their free time. By doing the debate, the students have the opportunity to still get educated on political policies while receiving necessary class credit,” freshman attendee of the debate Matthew Corkins said.

This debate was a great way for students who aren’t the most political to get the bare essentials

drama that surrounds this election provides students information about the candidates beliefs that may not be evident by looking at the media coverage.

“I think the students were interested by what the representatives had to say. In my psychology class, we talked about how there were a lot of things that students didn’t know about each candidate that they learned because of the debate,” said freshman Bradley Riley.

Another beneficial thing students could do at the debate was register to vote. This service was especially useful to new voters who may not know how to register to vote. It also enabled students to find out if they were registered or not.

important to know that we have a voice and can help shape the future of our nation. Even students who don’t consider themselves political understand it is their duty to educate themselves about what is going on and about each candidate’s views, as this election will directly affect our daily lives.

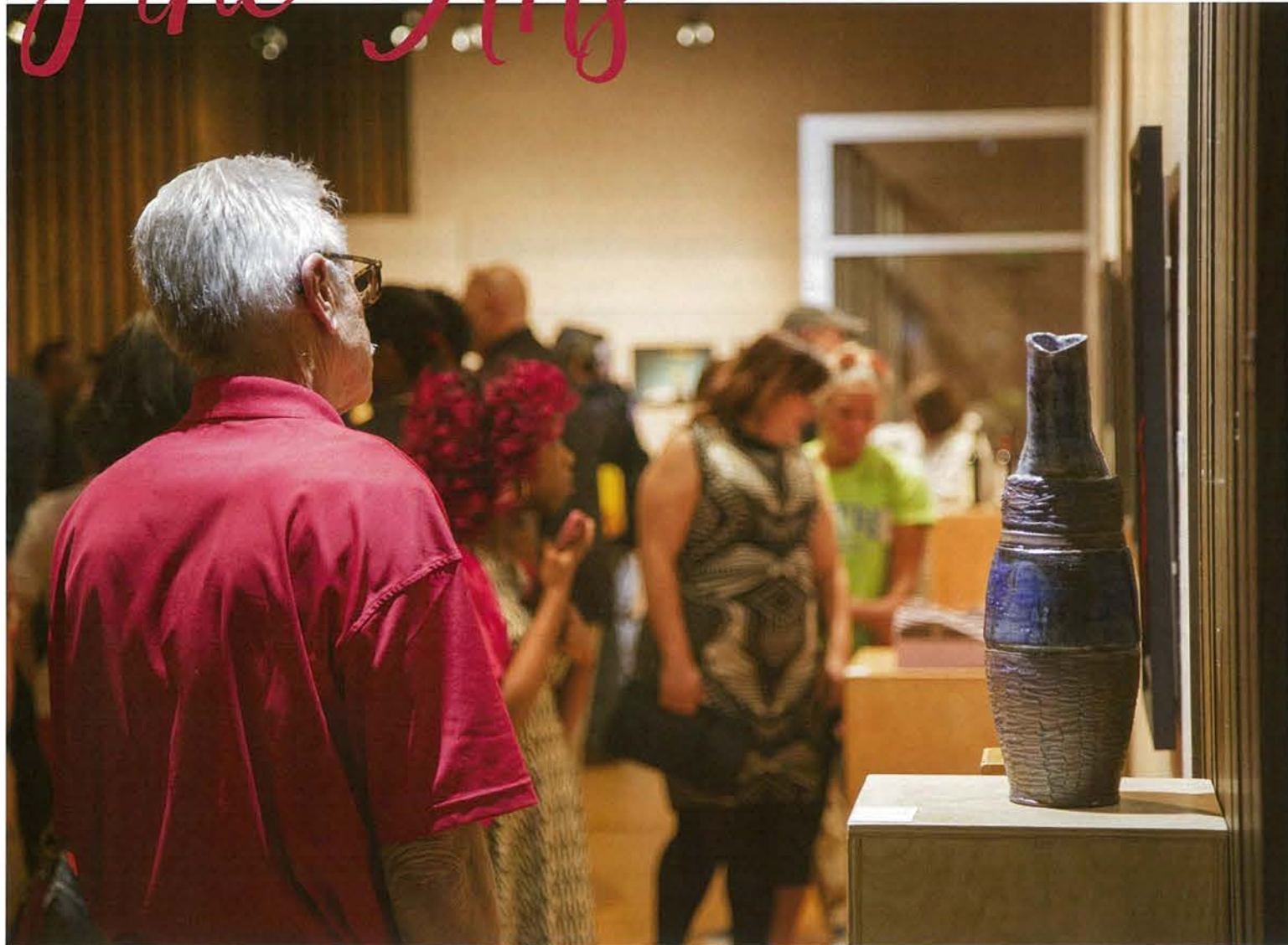
Participation at the event was strong because our student body recognizes that the freedom to choose our country’s next leader is one we can’t take for granted. Debates like these are a great resource for busy students to get the quick facts they need to feel confident about who they’re choosing.

2016 Election Results

Hillary Clinton won the popular vote by 2.9 million votes over Donald Trump. Whose total votes weighed in at 65,844,954 (48.2%) to Clinton’s 62,979,879 (46.1%). Many believe the United States’ Electoral

College voting system is outdated. Trump won in several states that have a high number of Electoral Votes, awarding Trump the Presidency with 306 Electoral Votes to Clinton’s 232.

Fine Arts



The public looking at pieces in the 4th Annual MWSU Juried Art Show. A professional juror, Benjamin Parks, choose what to display; giving students an opportunity to show off their work.



Above are several pieces displayed at the Twins Cups and Off the Wall Art Shows. Most of the pieces were made by the Clay Guild.

Missouri Western's art students had a reason to celebrate as they held an open house to show off their pieces in Western's Juried Art Show. An annual event, students submitted their works to be put on display in Potter Hall, as well as be judged by an outside artist. Community members were invited to the show to pass their own judgement, as well as enjoy refreshments.

Potter Art Gallery Director Rebecca Foley was on hand during the event, and was able to describe the process in which the students' pieces were chosen to be displayed.

"We give the students an opportunity to submit work that they are proud of to an outside juror, who is an art professional within the region," Foley said. "That juror selects work to be displayed here in the gallery, which is a professional opportunity for the students. The art department is really proud of our students and it's a great opportunity for us to showcase what they do."

The juror also selected several students' art works to receive special honors at the event. While no scholarships were given out to students whose work received this special recognition, they did receive prizes.

One such student was J.D. Soil, who had several pieces of artwork on display, including

a painting that was selected to receive additional honors from the juror.

"This piece to me represents my connection to my creativity and my spirituality," Soil said. "I feel like those things work together and compliment each other. I love this piece, it's my favorite piece. I love that people see the beauty in it I see."

Paintings were not the only things being displayed in the gallery. Artistic photos, award-winning graphics and even wine bottles were shown.

Kelsey Trueblood, a junior studying Graphic Design, had a promotional poster she designed on display.

"My art piece was made through Illustrator and it was supposed to be for the AIGA Conference," Trueblood said. "I'm very proud to see it displayed; I've never gotten anything in here, it's my first show, so it's pretty cool to see it come through and see my work be shown."

Besides being an opportunity for the students to show off their work to peers, the show was a good way to show friends and family members the fruits of the students' labor. In all, the show was a great chance for students to build their portfolio and exhibit their art while having a good time.







Seth Campbell

Former Western student, Seth Campbell, is a jack of all trades. Growing up locally and graduating from Central High school in 2009, Campbell headed into college not really knowing what he wanted in life.

Campbell is now a realtor in St. Joseph, but he never saw himself in sales.

“As a kid I thought being a salesman would be scary, I never in a million years saw myself in sales or being a realtor,” said Campbell.

Campbell was a public relations major and worked on campus in the public relations office.

After graduation he said he was like any other kid that was fresh off the stage with his diploma, with no clue what to do.

“When I got out of college I was trying to get into advertising first, I wanted to be a copywriter,” said Campbell.

“After graduation I got a job with a sales company in Kansas City,” said Campbell.

Campbell would go door to door selling things like season passes to sports events and other packages.

“There was a time my partner and I almost got arrested over a miscommunication,” said Campbell.

“A woman thought our product was a fake

or a scam so she called the police and they set up a stakeout to catch us.”

“Once we explained to them that we were legit, I tried to sell one of the officers a package but he wasn’t interested,” said Campbell.

After this Campbell knew locals in the cable and production industry, and got into local advertising.

Campbell was even apart of the production of the famous East Hills Mall commercial that made it to national television.

“I worked with commercials for about two years, it was great but with all the effort I was putting in I wanted to be making more,” said Campbell.

“I went from selling ticket packages, to commercials where I didn’t have to sell as much to make a profit but, I took that concept and thought, what’s the most expensive thing you can sell to someone? Its real estate, houses, and businesses” said Campbell.

In the midst of his journey Campbell was also in a music group, Julian Davis and the Hayburners, that was featured on America’s Got Talent.

Campbell plays the upright base in the group. They were cut just before the quarter finals in season 11.

Extreme Makeover

Ten years have passed since the Extreme Makeover Home Edition television show visited Kansas City and connected with Missouri Western to give a family a better life.

Thanks to ABC's hit television show at the time, the Jacobo family of 11, had their home rebuilt in March 2007. While the makeover was occurring, the MWSU Foundation informed the parents that they were offering full tuition, as well as room and board scholarships to the nine children, four of which were their own and five nieces and nephews.

For alumna Stacy Williamson, the home makeover was a pretty amazing experience. She said she is glad that such a nice family got the space and the help that they needed.

Williamson volunteered to work on the house during construction. Many other Western students and Kansas City community members volunteered to rebuild the home for the deserving family.

However, Williamson added that within the last 10 years, she believes that volunteerism hasn't increased, but that doesn't mean it is not an important activity to participate in.

"I think people need to volunteer in their communities, no matter what it is," Williamson said. "You need to be an active member of society and participate in what your community has to offer."

Williamson still spends time volunteering, but added that she was raised to participate in the community. Williamson

is now a teacher at Eastgate Middle School in Kansas City, not too far from where the makeover took place.

Another volunteer who worked on the home, Western alumna, Cory Hanavan, said that the hours volunteered opened his eyes to the impact one can make just by coming together with one goal in mind. Volunteers not only helped build the new home, they got the chance to walk in the St. Patrick's Day parade in Kansas City to help raise money for the family.

"Even though I was merely carrying a bucket and asking for donations, I had the opportunity to witness the generosity of the Kansas City community, first hand," Hanavan said. "Donors didn't personally know the Jacobo family, but they were willing to open their hearts and their wallets because they knew if Extreme Makeover Home Edition was helping the family, they should too."

Western helped a Kansas City family through volunteerism and the MWSU Foundation. The family received help from a number of student volunteers and financial help for their children to attend college. Western opened up many opportunities for the family through its dedication in making everything possible.

Ten years have passed, yet the volunteers and the family are still remembering and cherishing the Extreme Makeover Home Edition experience.

The Jacobo family was unable to be contacted.



"EVEN THOUGH I WAS MERELY CARRYING A BUCKET AND ASKING FOR DONATIONS, I HAD THE OPPORTUNITY TO WITNESS THE GENEROSITY OF THE KANSAS CITY COMMUNITY, FIRST HAND."

QUOTE \\\ CORY HANAVAN





Never forget. These words have helped define one of the darkest days in American history, Sept. 11, 2001.

2016 marked the 15th anniversary of the terrorist attack on the World Trade Center towers in New York City and provided an opportunity for Missouri Western students to reflect on what this day meant for them.

Even as college students, many of us were too young at the time to fully get a grasp on the situation that was unfolding before our eyes. Despite our age, it was easy to tell that whatever was happening was big.

“I was seven on 9/11,” junior Matt West said. “I was homeschooled, so I was out getting a haircut at Eckel’s Barber Shop. They had a tiny box TV in the corner of the shop, and it was on the news when it happened. I remember very vividly the second plane coming in. I didn’t quite know what it meant, but I remember I was scared because all of the adults were scared.”

Gaby Lammoglia, a junior at Western, has traveled to Ground Zero to witness the devastating aftermath.

“I was in class and I don’t remember much [about the attacks]; I don’t think they told us what exactly was going on,” Lammoglia said. “I don’t think it actually set in until I visited Ground Zero a month or two after. It was still a big pile of rubble, and windows in the building were shattered. There was a man there who took photos while everything was happening, and images like that can’t leave you.”

Whether you were old enough to remember the events that happened that day or if you were too young to grasp the situation, the attacks changed American lives. This attack would spur on many political actions and security reforms in our nation.

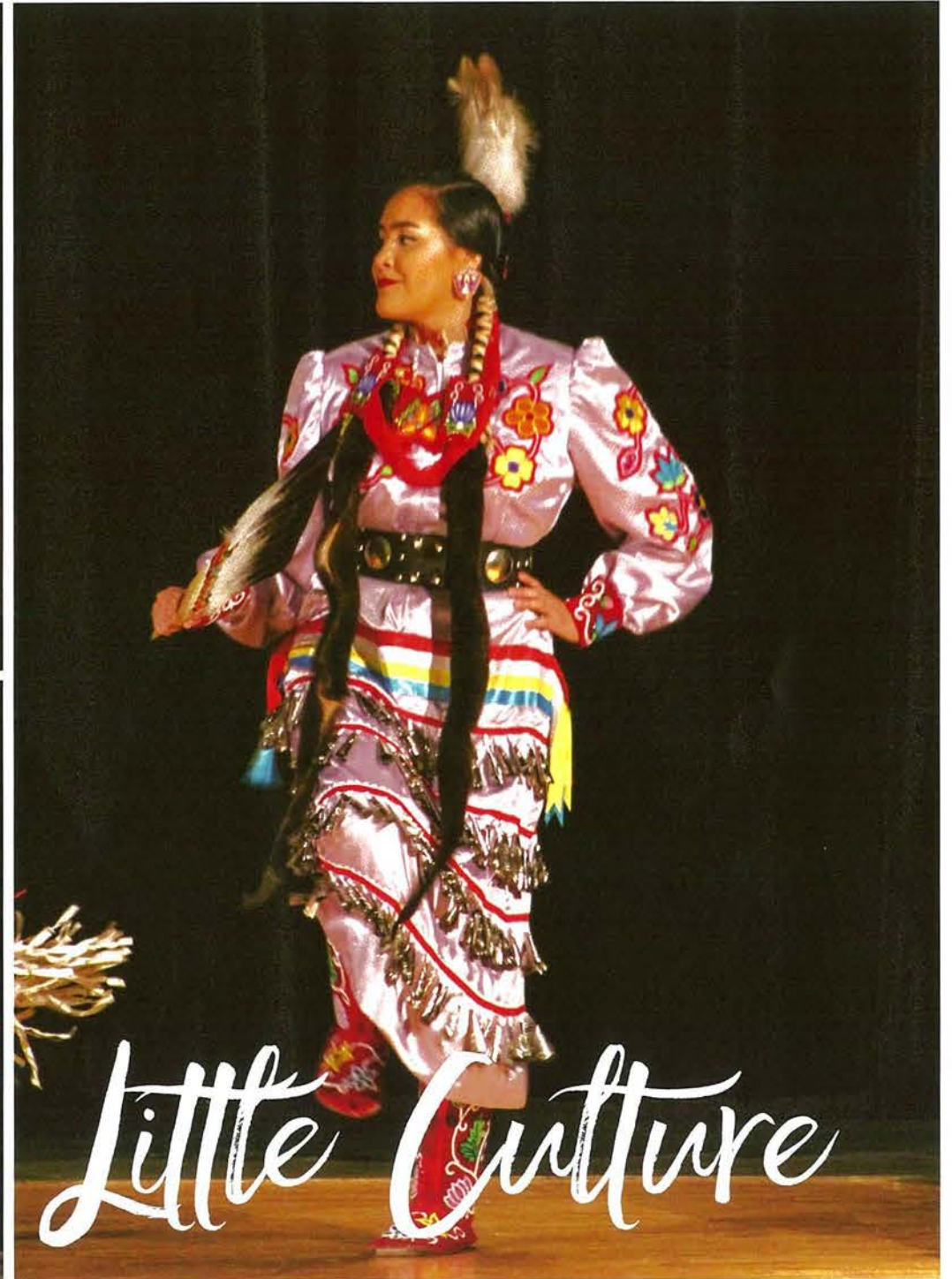
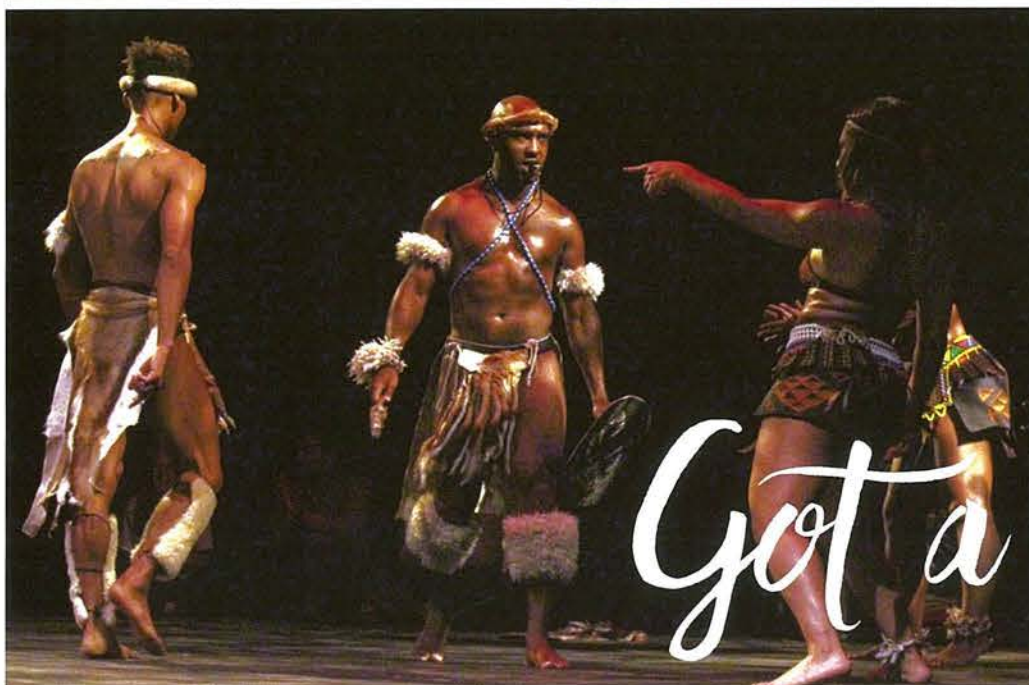
This year in commemoration the 15th anniversary of 9/11, Western sponsored a special showing of “Cronkite” in the Walter

Cronkite Memorial in Spratt Hall. “Cronkite” portrays Walter Cronkite’s reaction to the events of 9/11 in a live reenactment.

“[The showing of “Cronkite”] seemed an appropriate way to commemorate this tragedy,” Western President Bob Vartabedian said. “To have the widely known ‘most trusted man in America’ and our beloved St. Joseph native son, Walter Cronkite, weighing in on this horrific event seemed fitting.”

It’s important to remember that, though we were hit hard on that day, we didn’t fall.

Sept. 11, 2001, is a day that will live in infamy for the rest of American history. But amidst the chaos of that day, we found heroes. We as American citizens didn’t see dividing lines; we only saw brothers and sisters in trouble. We came together to help the people and families that were directly affected by this attack and to make sure it would never happen again.



Missouri Western has several cultural related events throughout the year. Some events, pictured above, include the Tami Tango Trio, Step Afrika and the Haskell Indian Nations University Dancers.



Students participating in the Charles R. Drew Memorial-Blood Drive. Drew's pioneering methods of blood storage helped raise awareness on the importance of donation.

"CHARELS DREW BLOOD DRIVE"

February is when the Center for Multicultural Education (CME) shows that they truly know how to host a memorable Black History Month. This year, after following an eye-opening event called 'Culture Shock,' a Charles R. Drew Memorial Blood Drive was brought to campus.

Unlike any other blood drives, the goal of this particular one is to increase the number of African American donors for Sickle Cell patients. It is also intentionally to honor Charles R. Drew, who was an African-American surgeon that pioneered methods of storing blood plasma for transfusions and organized the first large-scale blood bank in the U.S. Other focuses include the aim to raise awareness of the importance of blood donation and also to fulfill the specific needs of certain blood donor recipients.

According to the American Red Cross, approximately every two seconds, a patient in the United States needs blood. Kayla Wiedmaier, an alumna who has been volunteering to work with the CME for over six months now, felt more than happy to be part of the positive event to help save lives.

"It's so good to see a blood drive with a new approach being brought to campus," Wiedmaier said. "Though I'm quite

unfortunate to not be able to donate blood myself, I'm still certainly lucky and glad to be part of an event that will contribute so much for the future."

The blood drive started at 10 a.m. and ended at 3 p.m. on Feb. 14. During the whole duration of the event, a total of 33 people succeeded to donate blood. With the help of 12 staff from the American Red Cross of Northwest Missouri, Supervisor Amy Bratten said that she was elated with how well the event turned out to be.

"IT'S SO GOOD TO SEE A BLOOD DRIVE WITH A NEW APPROACH BEING BROUGHT TO CAMPUS."

QUOTE \ KAYLA WIEDMAIER

"Everyone who signed up and pre-registered to donate actually came for their appointments on time, which is absolutely a good thing," Bratten said. "As always, we also welcomed walk-ins and tried to fit them in as soon as we could."

At the same time, Bratten and her team executed a good plan in educating students about the measures of donating blood.

"Since this is a blood drive to honor Charles Drew, we got the chance to talk to a lot of the primarily African American students and ask if they are interested in becoming a Charles Drew donor," Bratten said. "We explained how detailed their commitment would be as far as having their blood donations being sent to a national database, to try and match them with sickle cell patients who need their kind of blood."

One of the attendees, Truly Le, who is a sophomore in management and marketing, wanted everyone to know how valuable it feels like to donate blood.

"I feel like this is something that everyone should do, because if you have more than an enough amount of it, and others don't have any, by donating blood, you actually get to show that you're caring for somebody in a very special way," Le said. "Even if your blood type doesn't have a match, your contributions will still go towards various researches and experiments which will then contribute to the future of having cures to the lots of types of diseases that we have worldwide."

The blood drive not only succeeded to make several members of the Griffon community feel special, but it also led to a perfect way to brighten up Valentine's Day.

"BLACK LOVE"

The day after Valentine's, students who attended "Black Love" were given the chance to enjoy a number of wonderful performances, eat a delicious dinner and embrace the beauty of the African American roots for Black History Month.

The dinner had been in the works and organized by a handful of students from the Black Student Union (BSU), a well-known student organization on campus, since November last year. Vice-president Paul Granberry III said the event turned out even better than they had visioned it.

"We expected 35 people to come, but there were approximately 50 who showed up," Granberry said. "We were definitely pleased

with that."

Aside from a singing performance by Dianah Hidzir, there were several other students who shared their talent and appreciation for Black History, such as reciting poems and reading famous quotes from influential African Americans. Praising the entertainment that night was Latoya Fitzpatrick, the advisor of the BSU.

"I think with the organizers incorporating the quotes from African Americans kind of gave the audience, and the reader, a time to reflect on the issues that they may have experienced coming up, and then for them to reread it and think about how it applies to their lives now," Fitzpatrick said. "It gave

them more purpose to continue achieving whatever goals that they have."

While enjoying the performances, guests were also served a delicious spread of food. Oganya Agbaji, one of the attendees, said that she enjoyed the night very much.

"It was definitely a good time; especially during the middle of the week, us students got the chance to get away from the books for a little while and enjoy some great entertainment and awesome food," Agbaji said.

Besides Black Love, the BSU will also be hosting their annual BSU Week and a beauty pageant in April.



Students attending "Black Love," a dinner and performance as part of Black History Month. Black History Month included several different events like culture shock, movie night, and a soul food lunch.

The Center of Multicultural Education ended their celebration of Black History Month with an interactive tour of the Black Archives exhibit within the St. Joseph Museums. On Feb. 28, the CME hosted an interactive tour of the Black Archives section of the St. Joseph Museums. 11 people joined the trip and all of them were definitely pleased with their decisions.

Alexis Williams, one of the program assistants at the CME, said that the center had organized the events for the whole duration of Black History Month since last year, and they were very happy with the end product, including the Black Archives Tour.

"We're absolutely happy with the turn out," Williams said. "Even though students are pretty busy nowadays with their schedules and such, we are still so glad to see them take some of their time out and participate in the events that we have put together."

The tour departed Blum Union at 3 p.m.

and was greeted by a group of staff who were in charge of the Black Archives department of the museum. Kicking off the tour was a short presentation about Kelsey Cooper Beshears, a woman who had changed Black History in the old days, and also some information regarding the Children's March that had happened back in 1963.

Sarah Elder, the curator of collections for St. Joseph Museums Inc., believes that it is significant for the particular facts regarding Black History.

"It's important for everybody to come to learn about this," Elder said. "Because you can't know the whole history of your community if you don't know the good, the bad, and the ugly of every immigrant that have come from Europe, Africa, or whatever their heritage is; because they make the whole history possible."

Since Missouri Western students were not the only ones who were escorted during

the visit, Elder was also happy with the execution of the tour that had been growing progressively well since the first time they started it four years ago.

"We started off promoting tours for high school students," Elder said. "This is the first year that we've had all three public high schools, students from Missouri Western and also the Diversity Student Union from the Central High School join us."

The tour lasted for approximately three hours. Denae McDougle, one of the students from Missouri Western who attended, said that she definitely learned a lot from her visit.

"I really loved the documentary that they provided about the Children's March, because I got to see exactly what people went through during those days and what they were willing to do to fight for freedom," McDougle said.



Holi Festival

Rain Rain go away come again another day... Although the rain postponed this year's Holi Festival, that didn't stop the colors from flying high this spring. The cool spring day was full of bright, colorful powder bursts as students, guests and staff participated in the traditional festival of colors.

The International Student Council and Student Government Association held the event in honor of the Indian holiday for yet another year. Graduate student Kartheek Gaddameedi, an Indian Native, explained the importance of the festival.

"Holi is a Hindu festival celebrated in beginning of the spring season in India. However, despite of religions, languages and Geo-locations everyone loves to celebrate around the world," said Gaddameedi. "We believe that it is a transformation from bad to good, old to new and broken relations to strong bonding. We spent our childhood with a lot of colorful Holi memories and always miss them as we grow far from our lands."


While the spraying of the color powders filled the air, senior Geornesha Jefferson wasn't worried about her appearance and how long the powder would take to get out of her clothes.

"I thought it was going to take a long time because I had braids in but it didn't take long at all. One wash and it came out of my hair and it was the same for my face, body and clothes. Regardless of the mess, it was a fun experience I'm glad I could be a part of," said Jefferson.

For international students like Gaddameedi, this festival was a warm trip back to their cherished childhood traditions.

"Missouri Western brought all those colors back to our busy life and touched our childhood fun," said Gaddameedi. "I have been celebrating Holi for the past couple of years here. It was loads of fun; it multiplied from last year with music, dance, Indian food, friends. There is obviously so much color around us."



A woman with long dark hair, wearing a red and gold sari, is smiling and holding a glowing Diya (oil lamp) wrapped in gold paper. The background is dark with bokeh lights, suggesting a night festival setting.

Diwali is a five-day festival observed by Hindus, Sikhs and Jains in late October or early November to celebrate the triumph of light over darkness and of good over evil.



One of the things Missouri Western is known for is its high number of international students. With over 120 students coming from 37 different countries, it's hard

to go anywhere on campus without seeing one of their friendly faces. Western prides itself on this achievement, and celebrates this with its annual International Fair. During

the event, the international students set up displays showcasing the different aspects of their lives and cultures. They talk to students and answer any questions they might have.

The International Fair



Meet the World

To start the Spring semester, International Student Services hosted their anticipated “Meet the World” event.

Meet the World offers a unique “speed-dating” atmosphere. Participants are aligned in two rows, directly across and facing each other with International students on one side then American identified participants on the other.

Participants were given exactly two minutes to share information about their lives before switching seats and starting a new one-on-one conversation with a different International student.

“During this event, attendees are forced into very uncomfortable situations. They were asked to initiate conversation with total strangers,” said Fumi Cheever, assistant director of International Recruitment of Student Affairs. “But, it gives them opportunities to fulfill what both groups of people are looking for.”

International student Oganya Agbaji from Nigeria has participated in this event every semester she’s attended Western, making this her third Meet the World event.

“I remember the first time I did it [Meet the World], I was nervous. I was meeting international students as well, but now that I’ve been here over a year and it’s exciting. There are always new faces and it’s fun to sit and be part of it now and see how interesting it is,” Agbaji said.

This event is beneficial for both American and International students. According to Cheever, International students say that they don’t know how to start a conversation with or become friends with American students.

“This is a win-win situation for both sides,” Cheever said.

Participant’s switched seats more than 15 times during Meet the World, giving them each a glimpse into one another’s lives. Some students shared where they are from, what their major is and what they enjoy to do in their free time.

Acquisitions Collection Management Librarian Michelle Diaz attended the event to meet more students and find out why International students chose Western. She was able to share a little bit about where she works, but mainly Diaz was there to hear their story.

“They [International students] are all here for different reasons, so that was kind of interesting. We have a great variety of International students here so it was nice to have that chance to talk to so many people from so many countries,” said Diaz.

Although two minutes did not allow for in-depth conversations, many participants gathered afterwards to solidify some of their new friendships.

“You make a new friend. You’re not going to be close to everyone you met but at least one or two people stick around and you see them again. You hang out and obviously you learn more about cultures,” said Oganya.

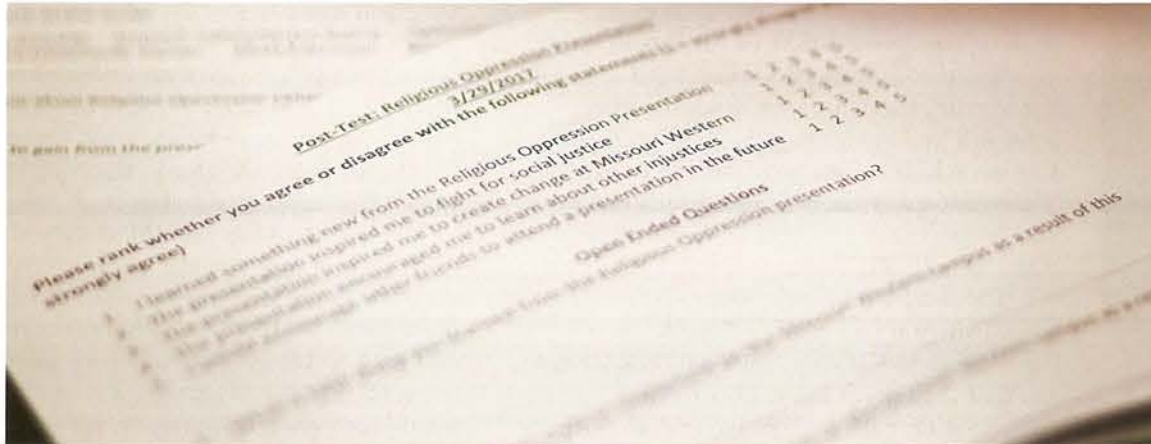
As for Diaz, she thinks that this was a wonderful opportunity that staff, faculty and students should all take advantage of when it comes around again.

“If you are just interested and want to meet some people from different countries and have a chance to have a very short conversation then this would be it. This would be a great opportunity for you,” Diaz said.



Participants attending the Meet the World event at Western prepare to begin the first round by sitting across from an International student. The event was put on by the International Student Services Office.

Striving for Social Justice



Top Left: The "Social Justice Institute" is a bi-weekly lecture series organized by the CME to help students take their first step in fighting for social justice. Latoya Fitzpatrick, Western's multicultural education director, briefs students about 'Religious Oppression.'

Bottom Left: The "Social Justice Institute" is a bi-weekly lecture series organized by the CME to help students take their first step in fighting for social justice. Both pre- and post- evaluation surveys are provided for participants at each lecture session.

RELIGIOUS CONFLICT ROOTED IN EUROPEAN CHRISTIANITY

- **Antisemitism**
 - 19th century term for Jew-hatred
 - European racializing of semitic

In the topic 'Religious Oppression,' students were exposed to several different terms that relate to the history of oppressive acts around the world.

Getting involved in social justice can be overwhelming, especially in a college environment. There are so many causes that one can get into, varieties of movements, tricky vocabulary words and facts to identify— and that can make it difficult to know where to start. Throughout the whole duration of the spring semester, the Center for Multicultural Education (CME) planned a bi-weekly lecture series called 'Social Justice Institute,' which is to help students take their first step in fighting for social justice.

The main organizer, also the person who delivers the lectures, is Missouri Western's Multicultural Education Director, Latoya Fitzpatrick. She believes that college students nowadays cannot only aim to excel in their academic courses, but they must also be engaged in learning about the concept of diversity and inclusion.

"It is very important for college students to understand certain terms regarding religion, because a lot of them originated way before our time in history," Fitzpatrick said. "This could specifically help them understand why some policies exist, and why certain do not."

Two of the main topics that were

covered in the lecture series are 'Classism' and 'Religious Oppression'. In the first presentation given by Fitzpatrick, a total of 20 students attended. Just as targeted, the audience who were present during the lecture came from an array of races: African-Americans, Native Americans, Alaskan Native, Latino, Hispanics and Caucasian.

Alexis Williams, one of the program assistants at the CME, said that the center had put together the lecture series since last semester. She and the other CME staff were very happy with the turnout for each session.

"We're very glad with how people came out to hear the lectures," Williams said. "Especially for college students, because a lot of us are not familiar with various different terms when it comes to fighting against social justice. To add on, having the residential meeting room as the location for the sessions, a lot of the students who live on campus are able to come and attend with no hassle whatsoever."

Mon'tra Qualls-Woods, one of the students who attended the lecture covering religious oppression, gained various new insights regarding the topic that was discussed.

"I actually learned so much more than what I thought I would," Qualls-Woods said. "I got to know about the history behind religious oppression in this country, which makes me realize how important 'inclusiveness' is, so that we won't repeat the same history again."

According to the data collected from the post-surveys that were answered by the audience, around 70 percent of the people who attended one of the lectures strongly agreed that the presentation inspired them to fight for social justice, inspired them to create change at Missouri Western and encouraged them to learn more about other social injustices. Qualls-Woods, says that he looks forward to joining more programs that relate to diversity and inclusion in the future.

"I'll definitely attend a talk like this again," Qualls-Woods said. "Because of the time limit today, we had to skip a few sections of the topic; but next time, I hope we'll get to cover everything from start to finish."

Besides the Social Justice Institute lecture series, the CME also organized a Cultural Competency Training, which was a half-day seminar offered by Kirk Perucca Associates, Inc.



Left: The run was in honor of our heritage with the Pony Express. Many onlookers and families of the runners enjoyed petting the furriest fastest racer to show up to the race.

Right: The cool morning air was filled with the cheers of onlookers as the race began. As the first racers started you could feel the electricity in the air.

The Pony Express Run

The year 2016 marks the fifth annual Pony Express Run, where running enthusiasts came from far and wide to take part.

The race has two separate categories: a 5k and a half marathon. Now don't let the half fool you; for the uninitiated a half marathon is still a grueling 13.1 mile run. There was also a "fun run" for kids interested in partaking in running.

It's no secret that running has several benefits for one's health and wellness. This run didn't just benefit the runners though. It also benefited the Junior League of Saint Joseph and United Way of Greater Saint Joseph with the proceeds.

This event highlights how a community

can come together and make a positive impact on others' lives while helping participants staying in shape.

"I started running to stay active, to stay in shape, and when I first started, I really disliked it. But, it definitely grew on me." Ryan Swafford, a runner in this year's 5k, said. "For me, it's about so much more than staying active. It helps me to stay sharp mentally, maintain energy for longer amounts of time, relieve stress, push myself and tack on a few extra calories when there's a good meal in front of me."

The other option at the race for adults was the half marathon, a distance that participants have to work and train themselves to be able to do. At over 4 times the length of a 5k, the

half marathon was a race that was just as much about endurance as it was speed.

While the idea of running this distance may seem daunting to many, for some racers longer distance runs are the reason they come out.

"To be honest, I chose the half marathon because I really like the half marathon distance. You get in the zone after a while, and it's just not something I've found happens as much doing 5k races," Francis Gleich, one the runners to complete the half marathon, said.

So start training now because the sixth annual run will be here before you know it. Whether you're just starting out or are a long time runner, this is something you won't want to miss.



Left: Club Geek is a bar that provides retro gaming. The laid back bar gives guests the opportunity to unwind while enjoying classic games.
Right: Geneo's Pizza & Pub is a locally-owned family business. The pizza joint offers cheesy pizza with a family atmosphere.

When in St. Joseph

Do you ever get frustrated, bored and wonder what there is to do in the city? St. Joseph offers a variety of activities to do for the students at Missouri Western, a few of which are Geneo's Pizza & Pub, Kelly's Pub and Club Geek.

Get out of your dorm and explore the city! Follow Frederick Avenue to downtown St. Joseph; where you'll find an innovative and changing landscape growing younger each day.

Geneo's Pizza & Pub is locally owned and located in downtown St. Joseph. It has recently expanded, offering plenty of seating for its customers. The restaurant offers pizza, calzones, pasta and other appetizing choices.

Melissa Palmer, the owner of Geneo's, supports Missouri Western academics and athletics.

"We have huge TVs covering the walls so all the sports are available for sports lovers and we know young adults love pizza," Palmer said.

"We advertise and donate anyway we can."

During the football season, some players visit Geneo's to have a night out before their game. In addition, the women's volleyball and soccer teams will come to Geneo's to have a team outing. Geneo's also donates gift cards to the teams and helps advertise their season games.

Kelly's Pub is another attraction in St. Joseph for college students. Where they can go to drink and relieve college stress. It is a place students can go to have a good time with friends and meet new people.

Shelby Dier, a senior in Alpha Gamma Delta, said that Kelly's is always willing to open their bar up to a fraternity and sorority mixers.

"Kelly's is a fun environment to go to and drink: It's cheap and safe," Dier said. "It's a good place to go and relieve stress for the night."

A new place on the downtown scene is

Club Geek. Club Geek is a bar with a retro gaming atmosphere. It allows one to enjoy some drinks while playing some video games and chatting with friends.

Returning student Gabriel Barton said that Club Geek is great for our university because it offers a nice experience for students while being away from campus.

"As a returning student to MWSU, Club Geek really helped me connect with the current students going to school, so I'm not going back feeling like I don't know anyone," Barton said.

Club Geek is currently located right next door to Geneo's Pizza & Pub. Since the university is a dry campus, it's a relaxed yet fun atmosphere that can attract students. In the town of St. Joseph, here are a few options to allow you to explore the city and add to your college experience.



Eagleton Pool is one of several renovation projects to have been recently completed on campus. Before restoration, it had leaked over five gallons of water each minute.

After undergoing a much-needed renovation over the summer, Missouri Western's indoor pool was re-opened with a public ribbon ceremony on August 30. The Eagleton pool, named after the late Senator Thomas Eagleton, garnered the attention of students, faculty and community members alike while paying an unveiling tribute to the legacy Senator Eagleton left on Missouri Western.

According to Shana Meyer, the Vice President for Student Affairs, the pool had major issues before its revamp.

"We were facing lifeguard shortages," Meyers said. "Pool usage was at an all-time low and the pool was leaking an astronomical five gallons of water every 45 seconds."

Western officials went back and forth, deciding if the pool was worth refurbishing. The pool debate created a large amount of

controversy. With the significant amount of money being put into the pool and the facility not being used, turning it into another gym or recreational area was a topic of discussion.

After numerous meetings, discussions and help from Mayor Falkner and the support of the community, the restoration of the pool went from a plan on paper to its grand re-opening.

When discussing improving the pool, Jerry Gentry, director of physical planning, gave in depth details on how the project came together.

“When we found out that we had partners with the school district, the city and the county and everybody wanted to contribute, then it was a really good working system,” Gentry said. “We found out how much interest there was with keeping, maintaining and getting a new indoor pool and everyone said this is the direction we want to go.”

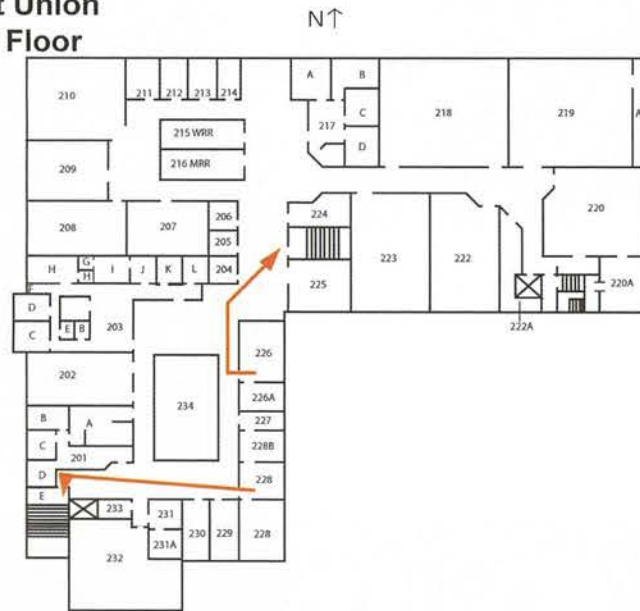
The ceremony was held outside of the pool entrance and was attended by Western students and faculty, St. Joseph legislators and members of the community. Mayor Falkner, Dr. Marvin Looney, Western’s former president, SGA President Alec Guy and other recognized leaders gave a few short words about the new pool.

They also spoke about dedicating the pool to late Senator Eagleton; who is responsible for funding many projects on Western’s campus, including the construction of the original pool.

The new pool layout is similar to the original, but the locker rooms and restrooms were completely renovated and updated. The new pool impressed local visitors, students and faculty members at the ceremony.

The ribbon cutting ceremony for the new and improved Eagleton Pool was a great way to start out the 2016 fall semester. With other big projects on the way, we can expect even more impressive restorations to further improve Western’s campus this year.

**Student Union
2nd Floor**



**Severe Weather / Shelter -In-Place Areas:
Basement**

Emergency Exit Routes

The plans for Blum show the current layout of the upstairs portion.



Blum Union acts as headquarters for many Western organizations, such as the Center of Multicultural Education and Center of Student Involvement. These offices were remodeled to better suit the needs of Western students.

Small Impacts,



Left: Students cleaning downtown St. Joseph for Griffon Edge. Service is a key value of Missouri Western.

Right: Western's fraternity, Phi Delta Theta, cleans up Spratt Stadium as a part of the Great Campus Cleanup on Feb. 18. The fraternity completes various community service projects every semester.



Above: Dr. Robert Vartabedian picks up trash for the Great Campus Cleanup Feb. 18. Vartabedian urged faculty, staff and students to come out to the event.

"SERVICE IS ONE OF OUR CORE VALUES, AND I THINK ALLOWING STUDENTS TO GIVE BACK TO THE COMMUNITY IS ONE OF THE MOST IMPORTANT OPPORTUNITIES THE UNIVERSITY OFFERS."
 QUOTE BY ALEC GUY



Right: GriffsGiveBack Director Brent Rosenauer presents the new center to organizations at the President's Leadership Council meeting. Rosenauer worked on setting this center up during the fall semester.

Big Difference

Student Government Association plays an often underappreciated role on campus; organizations and students receive a host of funding through SGA for everything from needed supplies to travel costs.

SGA is also involved in making certain upgrades/updates to the physical campus as well, and current SGA president Alec Guy hopes to continue with those types of projects,

“SGA played a pinnacle role in creating the concrete Griffon stamp outside of Blum and purchased some of the new water bottle filling stations/water fountains. Some students might not realize that SGA helped make both of those things happen.”

This year SGA has taken one more, much larger step towards not only bettering campus, but bettering the Saint Joseph community as a whole by funding a new program: GriffsGiveBack.

The idea for GriffsGiveBack was originally created by Brent Rosenauer as an easier way for students to get involved in service opportunities.

“GriffsGiveBack is a lot of different things but the major portion of what GriffsGiveBack is doing and will be doing is a clearinghouse for all volunteering activity at Missouri Western,” Rosenauer said. “The hope is that one day if there is anything that involves volunteering or a



SGA President Alec Guy supports GriffsGiveBack. Guy presented the idea to organizations at the President’s Leadership Meeting in February.



Through GriffsGiveBack, students and faculty can donate unwanted clothes to these yellow bins located around campus. Planet Aid has been collecting millions of pounds of clothing since 1997.

community in some way, it passes by this office, it’s tracked by this office for data for later use, and this office advises that group or that individual in how to do what they do,” said Rosenauer.

The first programming event GriffsGiveBack put on was the Great Campus Cleanup on Saturday, February 18. Numerous students showed up to deep clean areas of campus that university staff may not have time to normally address alongside university president Dr. Robert A. Vartabedian. Vartabedian could be found walking through woolly brush picking up trash and had this to say,

“I think it’s (GriffsGiveBack) very important. We have a beautiful campus. To keep it clean and just, the whole notion of giving back I think is central to truly being an educated person, to understand that it’s important to give back,” said Vartabedian.

The Great Campus Cleanup is scheduled to be held every season and encourages students to take some personal ownership of the campus they call home for four years.

GriffsGiveBack accepts submissions for projects via their website at missouriwestern.edu/griffsgiveback/project, and going forward Guy hopes that these kinds of initiatives will strengthen the bond between community and university,

“Service is one of our core values, and I think allowing students to give back to the community is one of the most important opportunities the University offers ... They allow the institution to build relationships with the community and show its commitment to the surrounding area. From both a student and the University’s perspective, these organizations are a large part of what makes MWSU so great,” said Guy.

The mission of GriffsGiveBack is one of intention, “to inspire a spirit of volunteerism in every student, employee, and alumnus at Missouri Western State University by 1) connecting each group with opportunities to give back to the community, on and off campus and 2) providing volunteers with opportunities to reflect on their service.”

SGA will continue funding GriffsGiveBack and new projects will be planned and implemented throughout the school year both on campus and in the community based on perceived areas of need and submissions.



SGA has a long-standing history of supporting and participating in community service events within the community. During finals week, SGA rang bells for Salvation Army at Sam’s Club.

Transportation



Imagine having to wake up at 6:00 a.m. just to get to an 8:00 a.m. class. That is a reality for numerous Missouri Western students. Commuting to campus has become something of an art form for some off-campus students – from riding the bus to carpooling, these students have found a number of ways to get to their classes.

One of these methods is the St. Joseph Transit system, which partnered with SGA this past year to offer free bus rides to Missouri Western students with a valid student ID. According to SGA President Alec Guy, the previous administration under Brad Stanton and Ida Haefner were instrumental in making that partnership happen.

“There are a lot [of students] that live on campus that might not have a car or some other means of transportation, or even if they live off campus and they need to get here,” Guy said. “So it’s just a nice free means of transportation.”

Guy explained that the 2015-2016 academic year was used as a sort of “trial run” to gauge interest in the program and to see if the partnership would be a good idea. Jessica Frogge, SGA’s administrative assistant, said

Missouri Western’s ridership had to reach 9,500 within that fiscal year for the agreement to be locked in. She says the numbers are promising for the program’s first full year, with over 10,000 rides given to Missouri Western students and employees in the fall 2016 semester alone.

“It is very important for students who come here who don’t necessarily have a car, or international students, or students that... maybe their car breaks down,” Frogge said.

Amanda Miller and Taija King are two Missouri Western students who make use of the bus system to get to class. While they say it is a great free way to get to class, there are some downsides – mainly being held to the existing bus schedule. Miller has to leave home at 6:20 a.m. just to get to her 8:00 a.m. class.

“I’ve had the bus – one too many times – be late,” said Miller, a senior biology major. “It could be improved. But it works. It takes almost two hours to get where I need to go.”

Taija King, a non-traditional freshman majoring in Spanish, is thankful for the opportunity to ride the bus, but she says it does have some inconveniences.

“This is a blessing, the whole ‘Griffons ride for free’ thing,” King said. “Otherwise I couldn’t afford to come.”

However, King, who doesn’t have home internet, says the fact that the bus only runs until 6:00 p.m. every other Saturday and doesn’t run Sundays makes it difficult to do homework and attend campus events held on the weekends.

“Being able to get on campus on the weekends would be a blessing,” King said. “With the buses, when you’re riding them to and from, you have to work with their schedule, and a lot of the events here on campus are after 6:00, so it makes it kind of difficult to stay for those.”

While the bus system is a popular mode of transportation for students living in Saint Joseph, students who live a long distance outside of town often have no choice but to drive themselves.

Maria Messer, a sophomore French education major, lives in Savannah and drives herself to campus three days a week for class and to work in the Non-Traditional and Commuter Student Center. She says carpooling would be a great option if the

opportunity came up.

“If there was a way to find out if there was someone else living in Savannah that might come to town on the same days... I’d be open to that,” Messer said.

Many Missouri Western students make the drive to campus from 40 or more miles away. Some of these students have begun to link up with other students that live close to them and established routines for carpooling.

Madison Williams, who travels from Chillicothe, Missouri, is a carpooler with a group of Missouri Western students. Williams says she’s happy with the opportunity to carpool.

“Carpooling with a group of my friends from high school definitely helps the drive go by faster because you have someone to talk to,” Williams said. “Being a commuting student can be expensive when it comes to transportation costs, so it cuts my costs way down.”

Overall, commuting students make their way to campus in a variety of ways – some more convenient than others. But there is certainly no shortage of options.

Right: A Western student waits for the bus to arrive. St. Joseph Transit has provided free bus rides to Western students since 2015.









Greek Life





After a rush week filled with community service, fruit smashes, and games, it was bid day for the new pledges here at Western. Fraternity brothers, along with family and friends, gathered in the Kempker Theatre to welcome their new members.

The first to welcome home a new brother was Alpha Sigma Phi, a business fraternity organized by President Kelsey Cartledge. His fraternity welcomed 13 quality pledges this fall.

With their motto "To better the man," Cartledge explained that Alpha Sigma Phi got its start at Yale in 1845 as a secret underground organization.

According to Phi Delta Theta President Connor Samenus, the Phi Delts joined

Western in 1994 to encourage men to "become the greatest version of yourself."

"Our chapter is made up of 41 active members, who genuinely seek to better themselves and campus life," said Samenus. "We actively participate in community service as well as raise proceeds to donate to find a cure for ALS, out national philanthropy."

Vincent "Prez" Sims, president of Tau Kappa Epsilon, welcomed nine pledges this year. Tau Kappa Epsilon was established in 1899, but has been improving campus since 1971.

"Our motto is 'Better men for a Better world,'" said Sims. With over 250 thousand members world-wide, these young men have the power to change the world, starting at Western.

Bid Day

Bright and early Sunday morning Sept. 18, girls lined up on Western's football field to go home to their new Greek families. One by one the girls were announced and sent home.

Before the heartwarming homecomings began, each sorority was gathered on the football field building their energy for the day. After a long week of activities, the groups hard work finally paid off.

As the celebrations started, Alpha Sigma Alpha was among the first to gain a new member, sophomore Kaylea Frye.

"I cannot wait to be a part of a group of girls that genuinely care about me, and want me to be the best version of myself I can be, whether it be through philanthropy projects or getting an 'A' in my bio lab," said Frye.

As the line got smaller and smaller the

excitement only grew. Freshman Maddie Salmon went home to Tri Sigma and could barely contain her excitement.

"I have been so excited for bid day all week," exclaimed Salmon. "I decided to rush because, as a freshman, I don't know very many people on such a big campus and I felt like I would get discouraged through school without friends and people to go to or ask questions," said Salmon.

After all the new recruits were home, it was time for the Rho Gammas to rejoin their sororities. They work on the Panhellenic council, and give up their letters for a month to mentor the new members with an unbiased opinion for each sorority.

Tears of happiness fell down the faces of everyone welcoming home sisters, new and old.





Phi Delta Theta Concert

Western Fraternity, Phi Delta Theta, kicked off the school year with their Fourth Annual Fall Concert on September 7. Performers included local band Nine Miles to Nowhere, The Strive and John King.

While Phi Delta Theta had the help from the whole organization, sophomore, Brendin Wood was in charge of booking the entertainment and organizing the concert.

“I’m honored that I was selected to be in charge of this year’s fall concert. I am really appreciative of my brothers’ help along the way and seeing the fall concert makes me that

much more excited for the school year and Phi Delta Theta” Wood said.

Phi Delta Theta Vice President, Reyhan Wilkinson was very please with the outcome of the event.

“I think everyone involved in putting the concert on did a great job with coming together and pulling it off. It was awesome to see how many people came out from seniors to freshmen” Wilkinson said.

The free summer time vibes themed concert brought in an eager crowd of students saying goodbye to summer and hello to a new school year.

Float-A-Thon

Western sorority Alpha Sigma Alpha hosted their annual Float-A-Thon on Sept. 29th. The purpose behind Float-A-Thon is for the members of ASA to raise funds and awareness all day for their designated charity, Special Olympics.

The girls of ASA took over the Eder fountain from 8am to 8pm. With the help

of fraternity Tau Kappa Epsilon at the grill, money was raised by serving food and accepting donations for their cause. At the end of the day, ASA raised over \$600. These funds went towards their Polar Plunge event held for Special Olympics every spring.

Special Olympics is one of four philanthropies ASA gives to.





Special Olympics Bowling



Early Saturday morning Nov. 12th, Missouri Western sorority Alpha Sigma Alpha gathered at the Southside Family Fun Center to volunteer at the Special Olympics Bowling Tournament.

Alpha Sigma Alpha (ASA) is involved in many events locally, however one of their philanthropy focus' is within the Special Olympics. Joni Thomas, a three-year member of ASA, is the Service and Giving Chair that coordinates a majority of the events like this for the sorority's philanthropy projects.

"Alpha Sigma Alpha has worked with the special olympics since 1976." said Thomas. Since then, the sorority has raised over \$600

for the charity.

As the athletes began the tournament, the girls were excited to volunteer by helping physically disabled athletes down the lanes and giving encouraging feedback to all.

ASA member Cheyanne Kitchen was especially having fun with this philanthropy project.

"It is so exciting to be helping them today, I love spending time with the athletes," said Kitchen. "I enjoy working with the Special Olympics the most because I want to go into special education."

Hayley Tiller is a four-year member of ASA, enjoyed cheering on the athletes.

"My biggest thing is being out here watching these athletes and knowing they are just as capable as any other athlete," said Tiller.

The athletes were awarded medals and prizes throughout the tournament, bringing smiles to their faces and warm hearts to everyone there.

This tournament is just one event ASA helps with to benefit Special Olympics. The girls also participate in Polar Plunge, Float-A-Thon, Girls on the Run, YWCA and Second Harvest.

Jump A-Thon

The women of Sigma Sigma Sigma (Tri-Sigma) hosted their annual Jump-A-Thon Wednesday, Sept. 28.

The idea behind Jump-A-Thon is for the members of Sigma to be continuously jumping rope while raising proceeds and awareness for their designated charity, March of Dimes and Children's Therapy.

After welcoming 19 new members to their chapter the previous week, Tri-Sigma was excited for Jump-A-Thon because philanthropy is a big part of who they are.

Senior member, Stefanie Lowe, explained the importance of Jump-A-Thon to Sigma.

"It not only raises money for a good

cause, but it also allows us to show the new members everything that goes into being a good member of Sigma Sigma Sigma," Lowe said.

Freshmen at Missouri Western and new member, Riley Rasche, was excited about her first experience with Jump-A-Thon and starting her journey with Sigma.

"I didn't know really what to expect coming into it, but I had so much fun at my first Jump-A-Thon with all of my sisters and I can't wait to see what this year will hold for us," Rasche said.

With a cool 65-degree day, the girls with a perfect setting for their school-based event.



National Prayer Breakfast

While the National Prayer Breakfast may be a decades-old tradition, it became a new tradition for one Missouri Western student this year. Paul Granberry III became the first student ever to represent Missouri Western at the National Prayer Breakfast in Washington, D.C. from February 1-5, 2017.

Granberry, a sophomore accounting major and student senator, was one of only 100 students worldwide selected to attend the prestigious event. He said he was blessed to be able to take part in the breakfast.

"It was overwhelming," Granberry said. "3,000 people are able to take a weekend out of their life and out of their careers in order to come together under one purpose; and that's to better each other . . . under the same principles and values."

Besides opportunities to hear from world leaders and other speakers, the eclectic gathering also offered students the opportunity to engage in small group discussion. Granberry's group

alone featured students from the University of Washington, Virginia Tech, Georgia University and the University of Maryland.

Granberry first got the idea to attend the event in October when he connected with David Gouch at the National Student Leadership Forum in Washington, D.C. Gouch advised Granberry to try to go to the breakfast.

"In order to be the person you want to become, you have to establish those relationships," Granberry said, stressing the importance of support among leaders. "You have to have those connections in order to stay sane."

Granberry said he believes it is important for students to remain steadfast in their faith and values throughout their college careers and adult lives.

"Students are kind of being transformed to be in this place where either you have to go 100 miles per hour or you will get left behind," Granberry said. "If you take the time out of your day to think

back and reflect, I believe that you're able to not only stay on pace, but strive to be the head of the pack."

Missouri Western Vice President of Student Affairs Shana Meyer was partially responsible for helping Granberry acquire the funding to be able to make the trip to Washington. Meyer said it was an honor to have Missouri Western represented at the event and she gave a lot of credit to Granberry for his efforts.

"Anytime one of our students has an outside opportunity, we want to support that," Meyer said. "It gives them leadership experience, it gives them a better worldview and it helps others learn about Missouri Western too, so of course I was in full support."

The annual gathering of world leaders, congressmen and cabinet members is held on the first Thursday of February every year.



Paul Granberry poses in front of Sen. McCaskill's office. Granberry was invited to the National Prayer Breakfast in Washington D.C.



Paul Granberry meets with officials during his time at the National Prayer Breakfast. Granberry represented the university during his time there.

A close-up portrait of an elderly woman with short, curly, light-colored hair. She is smiling broadly, showing her teeth. She is wearing a light blue collared shirt and a dark tie with a colorful pattern. The background is dark and out of focus. The name 'Nikki Giovanni' is written in white cursive script in the upper right corner.

Nikki Giovanni

Missouri Western welcomed world-renowned poet Nikki Giovanni to campus on April 6 as a guest judge and speaker for Western's Mochila Review, a national literary publication.

For their annual writer's contest, Mochila staff select a guest writer to judge the contest. When selecting this year's guest, Dr. Marianne Kunkel, editor of the Mochila Review, said Giovanni was the first name to go on the board.

"Sam Lundy was one of our students who said, 'I want Nikki Giovanni here' and I think that was the first name that went on the board," Kunkel said. "I laughed and said, 'I do too, big deal' like that's not going to happen."

After a quick email and crossed fingers, the staff waited. Giovanni responded the next day with a phone call and agreed to be the poet to judge the writing contest and guest speaker in the spring.

Both the students and Kunkel were in awe. After running down the hall and sharing the exciting news with a colleague, Kunkel shared the big news with the Mochila staff.

"I couldn't believe it. When I told my

students they just fell out of their chairs, that's how it all started," Kunkel said. "Then I worked with her agent to secure a date for the spring but this was all because of the students, and bless them for dreaming so big. I don't know if I would have called her; I just didn't think she was doing this kind of thing. She's super famous, she has no reason to be touring universities other than them meeting her and seeing her read; that's just in her heart. She wants to speak to people."

"I COULDN'T BELIEVE IT. WHEN I TOLD MY STUDENTS THEY JUST FELL OUT OF THEIR CHAIRS, THATS HOW IT ALL STARTED."
QUOTE \\\ MARIANNE KUNKEL

The Potter Hall Theater was just shy of capacity for Giovanni's reading that evening. Before the reading, a few journalism and English students had the opportunity to interview and dine with Giovanni. Western students were able to talk with the famous

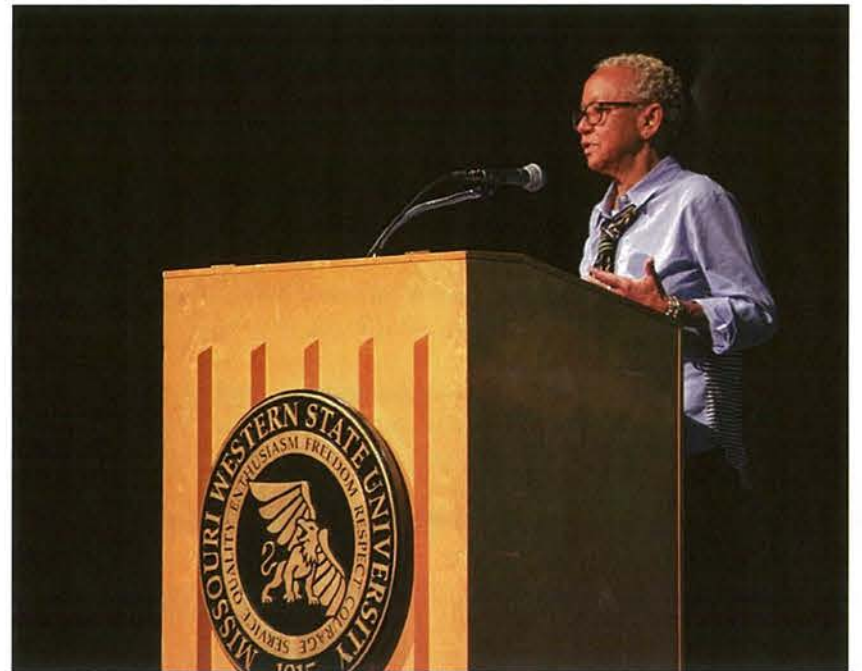
writer in an intimate setting, and learn about her life and experiences in a personal way.

Though many see Giovanni as a legendary poet and full of wisdom, she doesn't see herself in the same prominent light.

"I don't think I'm that prominent. I'm just a poet. I'm not Aretha Franklin, you know," Giovanni said. "But I never look myself up, because then I might worry about what people think about me and not my poetry."

Giovanni was always fond of storytelling and writing, which started at an early age. According to Giovanni, her sister was very pretty and her brother Gary was able to play the piano, and while she couldn't do those things, she loved reading and learning things.

Giovanni watched the world around her; the country she lived in, the planet she lived in, and being a fan of the heavens and NASA, she watched the stars. As she watched, she wrote and told stories about it and found her niche with poetry.



Top Left: Nikki Giovanni poses with her life-size cutout. Giovanni performed a few of her poems during her reading.
Bottom Left: Student Arniecea Johnson shared an original piece at the reading.
Top Right: Student Cameron Pike performs at Nikki Giovanni's poetry readings. Pike performed an original piece.
Bottom Right: Poet Nikki Giovanni shares a few of her poems. Giovanni answered audience questions after the reading.

“I am a writer because I am a storyteller,” said Giovanni. “Writers take what they have seen and done, and that’s going to be the substance. You have to identify so you can embrace it as a writer.”

Since her poetry debut in 1967, Giovanni has kept to writing poetry despite urging from fans to branch out.

“Oh, I could never write a novel. I look at novels by Toni Morrison and they’re so brilliant I’m glad I didn’t get involved in that,” Giovanni said. “I think that poetry and I got together simply because I put strange things together. I write about my experiences.”

While she has always loved writing, Giovanni’s path to literary success almost stopped before it could truly start. Giovanni always struggled with school because of her “sass,” and this attitude got her expelled from college. It was after she returned home and was working a variety of odd jobs, she

decided to be more.

“It made me think about life, and I had to make a decision,” said Giovanni. “I needed to do something more with my life and talents.”

“I THINK THAT POETRY AND I GOT
TOGETHER SIMPLY BECAUSE I PUT
STRANGE THINGS TOGETHER. I
WRITE ABOUT MY EXPERIENCES.”
QUOTE \\\ NIKKI GIOVANNI

In 1967 Giovanni graduated from Fisk University, and simultaneously started her teaching and writing career the following year. Since then, she has written hundreds of poems and over 30 poetry collections and children’s books.

Kunkel was pleased with the turnout and the positive responses from the event. She expressed the importance of Western

letting students, especially students in the humanities, to see professional writers when they (the students) are struggling to see how valuable their major is.

“I think we do a good job here at the university of trying to expose our students to important people, and that night was so overwhelming at how profound, yet warm and friendly, she was,” Kunkel said. “She never changed who she was. I’ve never been in the presence of an author that was so warm and what surprises me about that is that she’s so famous and has been doing this for so long.”

With such great feedback received of the reading from the community, students and faculty, Kunkel said that a few names, such as J.K. Rowling, were being thrown around for next year, but nothing would be decided until sometime during the fall.



LIVE COMEDY
FEATURING



RIP MICHAELS



CHICO BEAN

AS SEEN ON

Griffapalooza



Students got the chance to get wild and out of their residence halls on April 25 to see comedians Chico Bean and Rip Michaels from the MTV show Wild 'N Out during Griffapalooza.

Wild 'N Out is an American sketch comedy and improv television series. Chico Bean and Rip Michaels have been part of the series since its season five revival. Last year, the comedians visited our campus with other comedians to film their show.

The Center for Student Involvement hosts the annual Griffapalooza Comedy Show that is free to students. It occurs the week right before finals, just in time for students to relieve some stress before their heads get in the books.

Isaiah Collier, Assistant Dean of Student Development, believes that it provides a nice break to keep students laughing.

"It gets students out of their residence halls and onstage to laugh with one another," Collier said. "Everybody loves to laugh so why not bring a comedian to campus?"

During the show, students got the chance to go onstage and play some games with the comedians. For example, one game from the show called "Let Me Holla," is played by using a funny pick-up line on a girl.

Clarissa Blakely was one of the girls who was onstage during the game. She got "hollered" at by the comedians and

other fellow Griffons that attended the event.

"It's just nice to relieve some stress because we are all freaking out for finals and it is nice to come and make new friends," Blakely said. "That guy I'm going to be with English class tomorrow, he called me a 'tall white tree', so whenever I'm doing a presentation I'm just going to stare at him."

"IT'S JUST NICE TO RELIEVE SOME
STRESS BECAUSE WE'RE ALL
STRESSING OUT FOR FINALS..."
QUOTE \\\ CLARISSA BLAKELY

While the show brought a smaller audience into Spratt 101 than their previous visit in the Looney Gymnasium, the room was still filled with laughter and applause from the audience.

"I hope they [the comedians] come back and I hope the smaller audience didn't scare them," Blakely said. "It's probably just because we're close to finals that there wasn't as many people."

Bean and Michaels both said that they enjoyed both the students and their experience on campus. They also said that they like the diversity of our students.

"I can see that the comradery on campus is unified and you have a lot of diverse students here, and people seem to get along with each other," Bean said.



Sam Harris performs during the Spring Concert. Harris makes up one of four members of the X Ambassadors.

Spring Concert

The spring concert is one of Western's biggest events of the year. Shows in the past have featured a vast range of artists such as Switchfoot, B.o.b and Maddie and Tae. This year Western explored a different genre and featured arena rockers X Ambassadors with the opener American Authors. Both bands have been gaining traction in the past few years with multiple number one singles. On Saturday, April 28, they both graced the stage of the Civic Arena for a high-energy concert.

As with years previous, the atmosphere was electric. Concert-goers began to fill the arena with excited chatter and an overhanging sense of anxiousness before the storm.

Finally, American Authors decided that fans had been waiting long enough. They took the stage and launched into a set that lit

up the venue. Hands were clapping and the room was getting warmer as crowd members swayed and sang along with lead singer Zac Barnett. He mentioned before the show in an exclusive interview how excited he was to play for the college crowd.

"It's always different. We do a lot of college shows, which is always fun. We always find that the crowds at colleges are so energetic," Barnett said. "It's very rare that it's hit or miss; it's usually just hit. People are there having a good time and it's fun."

When American Authors were finished, the crowd was given a chance to recover, as the best was yet to come. After waiting in anticipation for several minutes as crews hurried to set the stage, X Ambassadors came roaring onto the Civic Arena stage.

The band was fierce. They took control of the arena with pounding drums and a pulsating bass for backbone, along with some delicious guitar riffage. Lead singer Sam Harris showed off his skills not only as a vocalist, but as a multi-instrumentalist. He donned several instruments throughout the set, including a guitar and a saxophone.

When the band had given their final bow, the audience was

left exhausted but whole. Student Myleigh Lanham walked away with a newfound respect for the two.

"I thought the show was great! Both of the performers really had a high energy that pumped up the crowd. I was more familiar with X Ambassadors, but American Authors did a great job incorporating their own songs and then covering other songs for the crowd to sing along with," Lanham said.

"What really shocked me about the show was that even though the crowd wasn't as big as probably their normal crowds, they still treated us as one. They didn't lower their performance energy or connection with the crowd at all. I felt like I really got to know the band and see their love for music and what they do," Lanham said.

While the spring concert for 2017 was definitely one for the books, picking the acts isn't always easy. The Western Activities Council (WAC) has the difficult task of picking just the right artists for the show. Different years come with different genres, but as WAC President Natalie Miller knows, you also have to get acts your audience will like.

"We had a lot of offers and a lot of bands that we were interested in," Miller said. "We took into consideration what the students would like, what the demographic of St. Joe would like and we determined what the best would be to do for our campus."

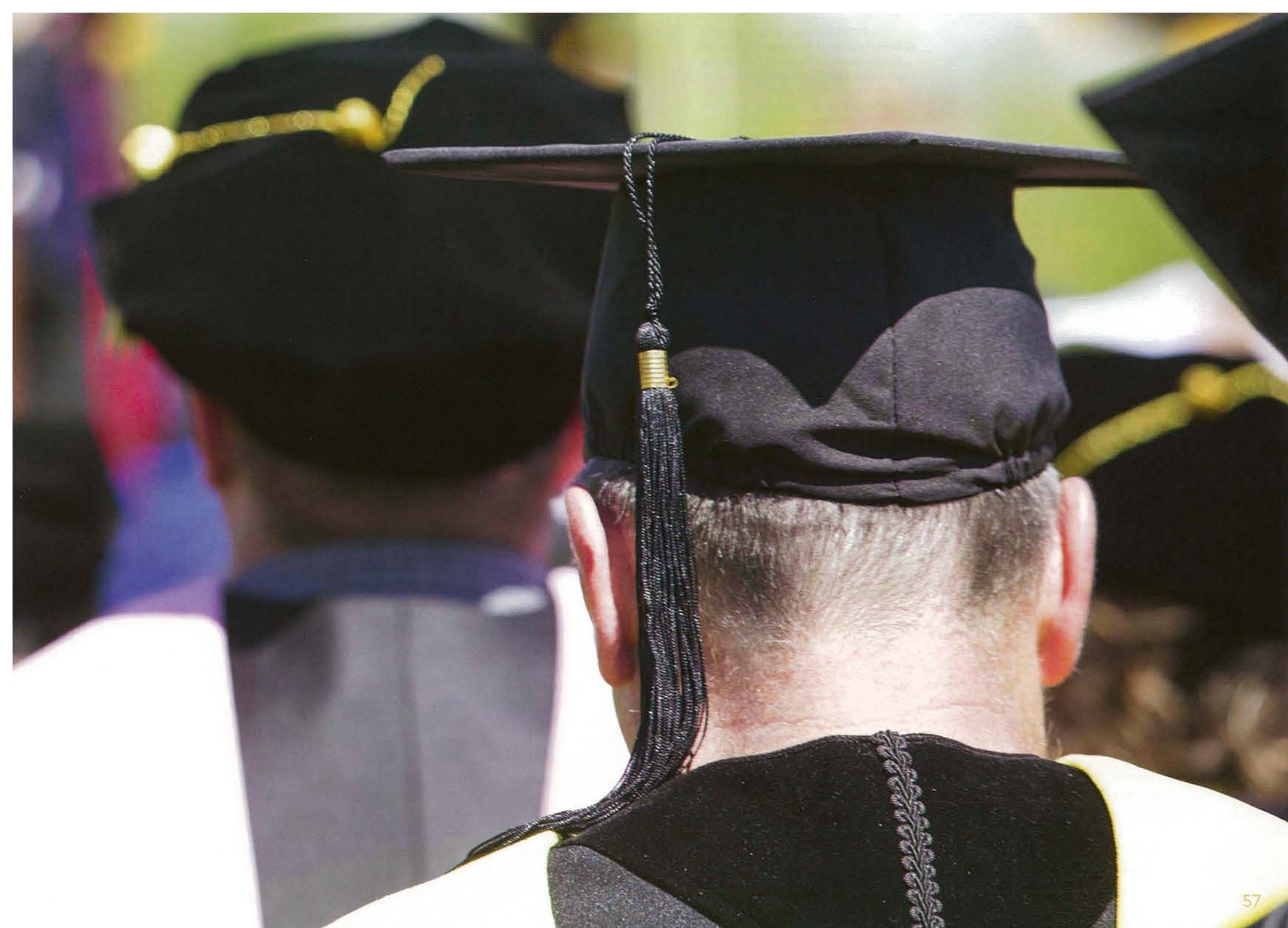
The spring concert for 2017 may be over, but it was a night the crowd wouldn't forget.



The American Authors perform at the spring concert. The American Authors opened for the X Ambassadors.



ACADEMICS



Political commentator Cokie Roberts speaks at Western's 2016 Fall Convocation on Critical Issues. She touched on the political disunification in America and gave her insights on the political campaign of Trump and Clinton. Earlier that day, Roberts hosted a breakfast with Dr. Vartabedian and student leaders.



Cokie Clears the Air

Bipartisan is a word rarely heard or practiced in American politics today, especially around election time when people gain prominence specifically for their political differences. This year's Convocation featured national political commentator, Cokie Roberts, who spoke on this political disunification America is experiencing today. Despite the cold, rainy weather, hundreds of students, faculty and community members gathered in Looney Gym September 13 to hear her speak.

The Dan R. Boulware Convocation on Critical Issues was first started 23 years ago with the hopes of bringing current issues onto Missouri Western

for students to get involved in the conversation. While past convocations have been less relatable, bringing Roberts on campus to speak about the political climate two months before a national election was extremely timely.

As a reporter for National Public Radio, an analyst for This Week With George Stephanopoulos, and as a commentator for ABC News, Roberts is no stranger to the political scene. She also grew up around politics as the daughter of former Louisiana Democratic Congresswoman Lindy Boggs and Congressman Hale Boggs. From an early age, Roberts has experienced first-hand the change, and disunification of politics.

"It wasn't always like this," Roberts said. "There used to be more moving across the aisle. What happened to this fundamental fellowship?"

When Roberts was younger, she and her siblings would play with children of other senators, regardless of their political parties. This led to officials getting to know each other outside of the political setting, and see them as something more.... as Americans.

"It's hard to demonize someone who's child is playing Clue in your basement. This is now gone," said Roberts.

Since the 1960's, Roberts said that American politics has lost this mentality of "what's best for

all,” and instead garnered the mentality of “what’s best for me.” According to Roberts, this shift has been a result of several factors: politicians not living in Washington, D.C. anymore, politicians living in a permanent campaign, the media’s influence, and the American voters. These factors are prominent in the current race for president.

Between the two candidates, Roberts claims there could not be more of a divide in ideals. Roberts commented that Democratic candidate Hillary Clinton has experience being in the political spotlight and eternal campaign, but has resulted in her being less transparent.

“Clinton is known for her secrecy and for



Roberts offers advice to those struggling to make sense of the election. Her experience in political commentating provided credibility to her opinions.

skirting around sensitive, personal topics. The American people don’t like this, nor do the media,” said Roberts.

The opposite is of Republican candidate Donald Trump.

“Trump has business experience instead of political, and is new to the campaigning scene. He has his fair share of closet skeletons that the media has had no trouble finding, though, as well as his very radical statements that the media have exploited,” said Roberts.

The 2016 Election has been like no other due to our nation’s increased attention on social media, which Roberts believes is to blame for much of the election hype, concerns and fears.

“WE HAVE SURVIVED, AND WILL CONTINUE TO SURVIVE, BUT THE ‘HOW’ DEPENDS ON THE VOTERS IN THIS COUNTRY.”

QUOTE \ \ COKIE ROBERTS

“The media are always looking for the next scandal,” said Roberts. “You always get quotes from the loudest shouter, regardless of the truth behind it.”

Roberts pointed out the irony in the race, though; while there are many factors aiding in this division, the most potent are the American people themselves.

“[This election] is a close race because of deep, radical divisions in the population, but the irony is that voters want politicians to ignore these divisions and work together to lessen inaction,” said Roberts.

However, Roberts jokingly mentioned that this is not the worst America has seen.

“They’re not shooting each other, so that’s a plus!” said Roberts.

Former Student Government Vice-President and current Assistant Director of Governmental Relations, Brad Stanton, appreciated Roberts’ comments on the political divides and how SGA doesn’t have these.



Cokie poses with a group of students after a group breakfast with the President. The group included SGA, Griffon Update, Griffon News and *The Griffon* members.

“I thought her analysis on the impersonal nature of national politics was spot on. It made me realize that [Western’s] Student Government is lucky to have members that are so close and care for one another because it lets us compromise and get things accomplished for the good of the University.

It frustrates me that the federal government has this problem and can’t seem to get anything done for America.”

Mary Dean, who works for Admissions in Enrollment Management, enjoyed Roberts’ ability to stay unbiased during her speech.

“I think she touched on so many issues; during this time it could have been a real political hotbed, and I think she handled that very graciously, addressing pros and cons about everyone.”

Like Walter Cronkite, Roberts encouraged Western to heart in the fact that America has been through horrible events in its past, yet has forged ahead a stronger nation. But ultimately, the outcome lies on the American voters.

“But, our comfort is in our history,” said Roberts. “We have survived, and will continue to survive, but the ‘how’ depends on the voters in our country.”

Without Missing a Beat





Missouri Western State University Board of Governors approved the establishment of a new School of Nursing and Health Professions.

The School of Nursing and Health Professions will be housed within the College of Professional Studies and will be led by an associate dean. The new school will include Western's undergraduate and master's degree programs in nursing, as well as the undergraduate degrees in health information management, physical therapy and the population health management degree.

Dean of Professional Studies Kathleen O'Connor acknowledges the complexities of the health relations programs and the need for a well-rounded professional staff.

"The nursing program at Missouri Western is one of our biggest and strongest programs," O'Connor said. "It is a very complex and challenging department to manage, just because of the complexities."

Western's nursing program began as an associate's degree program in 1971, admitting only 15 students. In 1986, the degree was expanded to a four year Bachelor of Science in Nursing degree. A Master of Science in Nursing degree was established in 2010, offering two major



concentrations: Healthcare Leadership and Nursing Educator.

Western admits approximately 100 students each year to the BSN program, with several working Registered Nursing students taking advantage of the RN to BSN program, which allows nurses to obtain their degree while they continue working.

In 2015 Mosaic Life Care established the first endowed Professorship in Western history, pledging \$1.5 million to create an endowed professorship of Population Health. The gift helped establish a bachelor's degree program in population health management, offered exclusively to Western students.

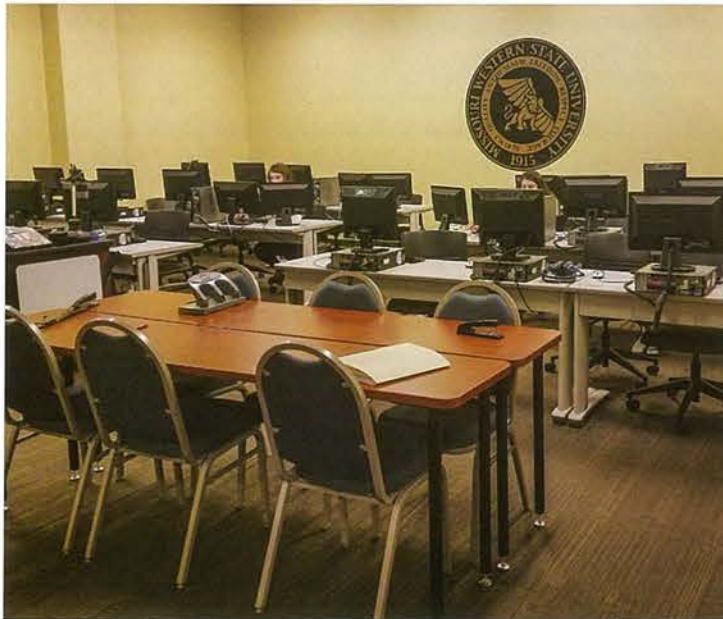
Missouri Western President Robert Vartabedian feels the establishment of the new school will highlight the roles the programs have in the university's growth.

"Our health-related programs are extremely well respected and warrant a 'school' designation," Vartabedian said. "The change recognizes the important role these programs have at Missouri Western, and will enhance the already strong external relationships our nursing and health professions programs have with Mosaic Life Care and other health industry organizations."

Northland KC Campus

Missouri Western State University has had a presence in the Northland of Kansas City at a satellite location operated by the Western Institute for over twenty years. The Northland campus is approximately 40 minutes from the Saint Joseph campus. However, few people are aware of this branch.

The Northland campus exists primarily for two functions: to increase awareness of the Western brand amongst prospective students in the area and to offer a 2+2 program with Metropolitan Community College (MCC) Students who have completed a two-year Associate of Arts in Teaching



degree finish their baccalaureate studies with Western in Elementary Education.

Julie Perez is one student who began her elementary education studies at MCC before transferring to the Northland campus and says it has been an experience she will never forget.

“My best experience at the Northland campus has been the relationships I was able to make with professors and especially my adviser Kassie Payne,” Perez said. “The Northland is a small and close community that would be hard to replicate at the main campus.”

Perez laughed as she explained the ease and accessibility of attending the Northland campus versus attending the main campus.

“I decided on the Northland campus because it was close to home, and i’m a Florida city girl,” Perez said. “The thought of driving up I-29 and possibly hitting a deer is terrifying! The most convenient thing about classes at the Northland campus is parking. I had to go up to the main campus for a class and in the rain, snow, sleet, and heat trying to find a parking space then having to park so far away and having to walk to class was dreadful at times.”

Dean and Executive Director of the Western Institute Dr. Gordon Mapley said that while the bread-and-butter of this location is the 2+2 program that many like Perez are enrolled in, it does play other

important roles.

“Having a presence in the Northland helps remind teachers who counsel students and parents who counsel students and students themselves that we (Western) are a viable option,” Mapley said.

The Northland location has also expanded what classes and courses are actually offered as well. This location has traditionally offered some graduate-level criminal justice classes and, this semester, added a course in accounting and a Masters in Information Management program through the Craig School of Business.

Marketing Coordinator and Analyst for the Institute Christa Byer hopes the available classes and courses available at the Northland location continue to expand.

“I personally hope to see the program offerings at this location continue to grow. Increasing the number of programs will only serve to strengthen Missouri Western’s branding opportunities in the area,” Byer said.

As the Northland continues growing, Mapley says it will be important for Western to maintain a presence for those students considering options nearby.

“The Northland area is an area of significant growth and there are literally thousands of students in the Northland area that we would like to come here.”



Missouri Western provides multiple programs at the Northland KC Campus. The location provided individuals the opportunity to take classes at their convenience in Kansas City.

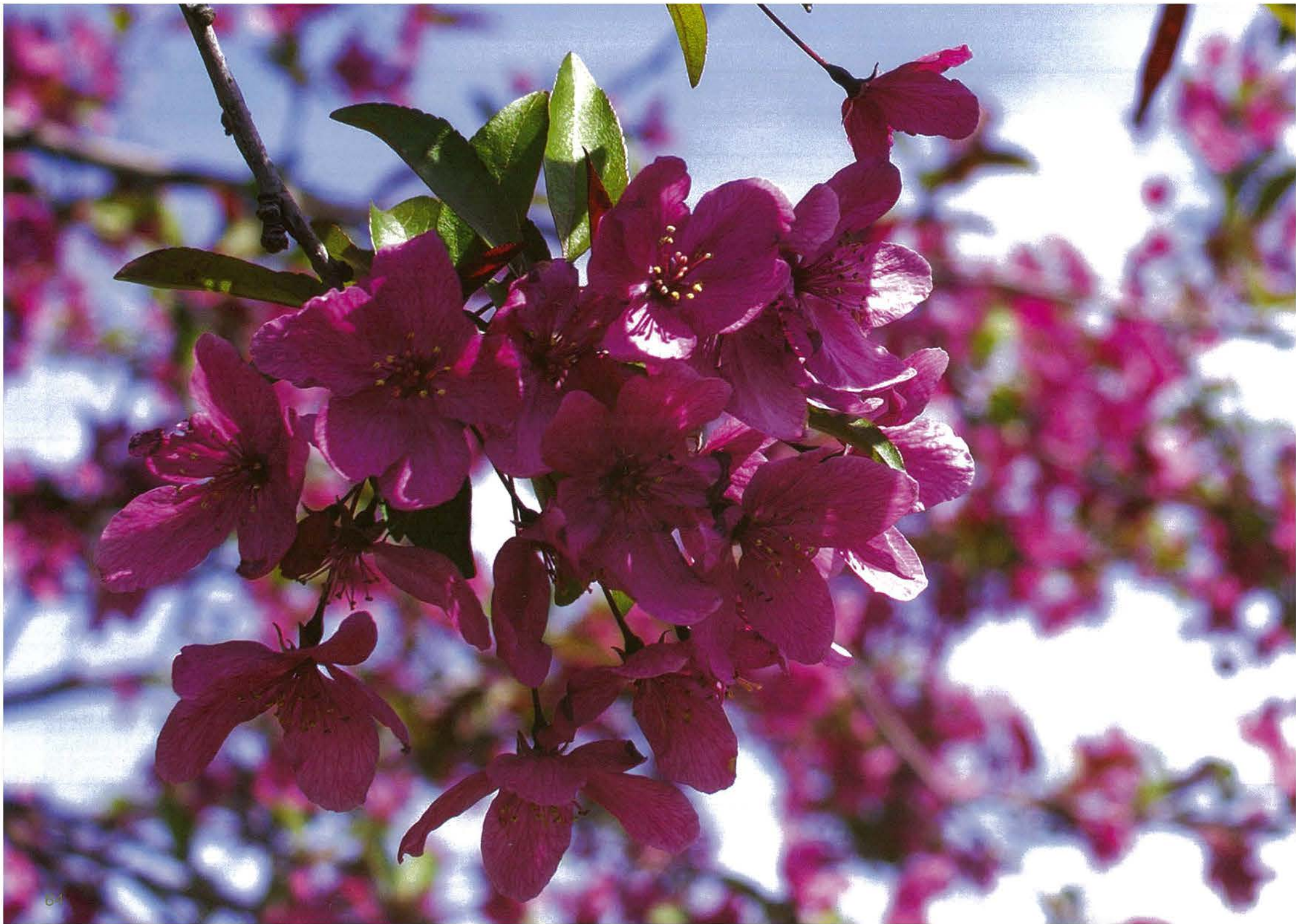




PHOTO \\
BLAIR RUSSELL DESIGN \\
JONI THOMAS

Winter Commencement

For most college students, graduation day marks the end of a long, happy, stressful, life-changing journey. It's a day for students and their families to celebrate in their accomplishments and dedication, and to look forward to what lies ahead.

Winter commencement for recent graduate, Jesse Walter, and her family was special because it's the first college ceremony they've attended.

"Commencement meant everything to me and my family! I'm a first generation college graduate; my family and myself had been waiting for this day for more than three years," said Walter.

For winter graduate, Janolin Higgins, graduation provided closure for her and her family.

"It was more important to my family than it was myself. I found that it helped me close a chapter in my life. For my family, it is where what I have been working on the past three-and-a-half years came to life for them," said Higgins.

Without a doubt, graduation is a special day. However, for graduates at winter commencement, this day took an unexpected turn due to a winter storm and the subsequent actions by Western officials.

Originally scheduled for Saturday, December 17, many graduates had coordinated with their families months

prior to the ceremony. But, because of the winter snow and ice storm, Western officials cancelled commencement due to poor travel conditions and safety concerns.

Officials, however, did not cancel commencement until Saturday morning, the day of graduation.

"It was devastating. Not only did my family travel in the dangerous weather to see me walk across the stage, but they traveled more than halfway before we found out it was cancelled" said Walter. "They did not inform us until most families had already been on the road for most of the time, when the weather was at its worst."

Later that afternoon, Academic Affairs announced that commencement would be rescheduled for Tuesday, December 20 at 11am. In hopes of accommodating more students and families, a second ceremony for 7pm was also added by Saturday evening.

Despite officials' attempts to include many students and families, rescheduling for Tuesday had the opposite effect.

"I was happy that they rescheduled it; however, I was disappointed. Because of the canceling and rescheduling, my family members were not able to attend either ceremony due to work, and the time it takes to travel to Missouri Western from where they live," said Higgins.

"Since it was rescheduled on a weekday

most of my family members were not able to make it to commencement," said Walter. "I was able to attend, but only because my new boss saw my sad Facebook post and was a Western alum. Not everyone was as lucky though."

The rescheduled ceremonies lacked traditional Western graduation aspects, as well, due to the short notice. Instead of being held in the gymnasium, they were held in the Fulkerson Center. The symphonic wind ensemble did not attend and play, nor did several professors and school officials.

Caleb Funkhauser, a percussionist in the wind ensemble, and several of his bandmates had stayed on campus or in Saint Joseph to play at commencement until it was cancelled.

"I know for most it was a minor inconvenience, like for people that had to stay the whole week just to play commencement then it ended up not happening anyway," said Funkhauser.

According to Jennie McDonald from Academic Affairs, there were 316 students that graduated this winter. From this, 83 participated in the 11:00 a.m. ceremony and 115 participated in the 7:00 p.m. ceremony. Since the first winter graduation in 1998, this was the first time Western has had to cancel or postpone a December ceremony.

"I WAS DISAPPOINTED,
HEARTBROKEN AND
IMMEDIATELY BEGAN SOBBING
HYSTERICALLY. I REPEATEDLY
REMEMBER SAYING TO MYSELF
THIS JUST ISN'T FAIR! THE
MOMENT I HAD BEEN WAITING
FOR.... WAS CANCELLED."
QUOTE \ \ LAUREN PATTON



● REC



Hour Film Festival



A team wins the Best Sound Design for their piece “The Noise” during the 48 Hour Film Festival. The team included Mohammed Alqarni, Kia Abhari and Viola Valeeva.



Professor Robert Hanson talks to the crowd during the festival. Hanson attended Yale University where he earned a BFA in Art with a concentration in filmmaking.

Once again, the members of Western’s cinema department knew how to take a challenge, have fun with it and present it to the general public at the same time. The annual 48-Hour Film Festival was held on Friday, Oct. 28, and the turn out did not fail to impress both the students and the local community.

The event was organized by the faculty and staff from the department of theatre, cinema and dance, and it was open to anyone with a passion for filmmaking. Teams were challenged to create short films within the duration of two days, proceed for a public screening and attend an awards ceremony right after.

Student Jorel Washington was one of the students who participated in the competition, and was extremely excited even before registering to be part of it.

“This is the only thing that we got in the cinema streams,” Washington said. “The Annual 48-Hour Film Festival and the Griffon Film Festival are two of the things that my friends and I look forward to the most.”

Washington and his team members filmed a piece called “Riding Dirty,” which was about a 30-year-old man who got dementia from his extreme habit of using cell phones. This character’s daughter tried to reconnect with him, but did not succeed because of his threatening illness.

“It basically explains how smartphones are actually taking over our world, and our lives now,” Washington said. “We enjoyed making the film, and we hope other people did, too.”

The film competition energizes filmmaking processes and challenges young filmmakers to put their visions into action within a short time frame. The result is a whirlwind weekend of skillful filmmaking with the satisfaction of a finished product at the end. The competition was open to all high schools in St. Joseph, university students and also the local community.

Having only two annual major events organized by the cinema department, David Paul, a student who took the advantage to show off his filmography skills, was happy

with his work as he and his other teammates were allowed to join the program in the beginning of the year.

“I had fun doing this event,” Paul said. “Especially because we were allowed to do it earlier than last time.”

Later during the program, the contestants held an award ceremony after being judged over their 48-hour masterpieces. It was held downtown St. Joseph at the Empower U headquarters.

Western student Charity Page attended the event with her mother to support her significant other, who majors in cinematography.

“I brought my mom along with me to support my boyfriend,” Page said. “He did a good job, and it’s fun to have a member from my family to witness his work too.”

Everyone attending the event had the opportunity to see all the screenings, and the winning groups were given plaques as tokens to appreciate their great efforts.



Alumni Uncorked

Western Alumni Association hosted Griffons Uncorked at Tipple Hill Winery, in Easton, Missouri, in April 2017. The Alumni Association is a non-dues paying organization that graduates and former graduates of Western can join.



Western Alumni who attended the Alumni Uncorked event were greeted with gift bags, and held a raffle, prizes included a stuffed Max Griffon, and other MWSU SWAG. Conversations included current events on campus and the wine provided by Tipple Hill.



The Missouri Western Alumni association sponsors numerous events each year for Western alumni. These events provide networking and outreach opportunities, and a chance to catch up with old friends. One event hosted by the Association this spring was a wine tasting at Tipple Hill Winery.

Organized by Director Colleen Kowich and Alicia Otto, they aimed to provide a warm welcome for the alumni and keep them connected with the University.

“Your relationship with the university does not stop when you walk across the stage,” Kowich said. “The purpose of the event is for an opportunity to come together, and network and socialize with one another in fun setting, such as Tipple Hill Winery.”

One alum in attendance, Jake Cunning,

enjoys being connected to the community and involved in the Alumni Association.

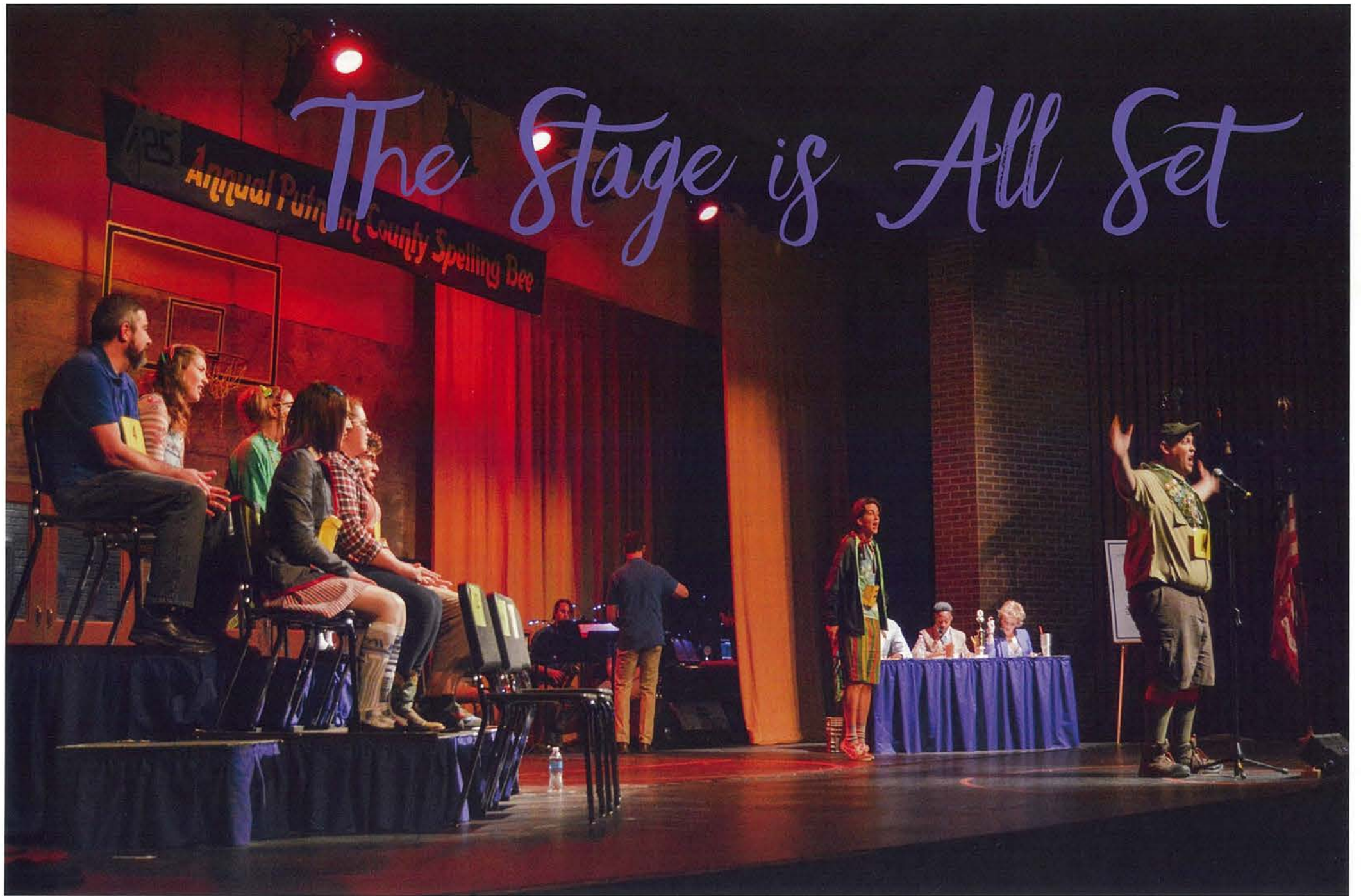
“It is a good connector after you graduate,” Cunning said. “You may not know what you’re going to get from joining in the beginning, but you may meet someone important, make a new friend or get your next job from it.”

Cunning encourages new and old graduates to get involved in the association.

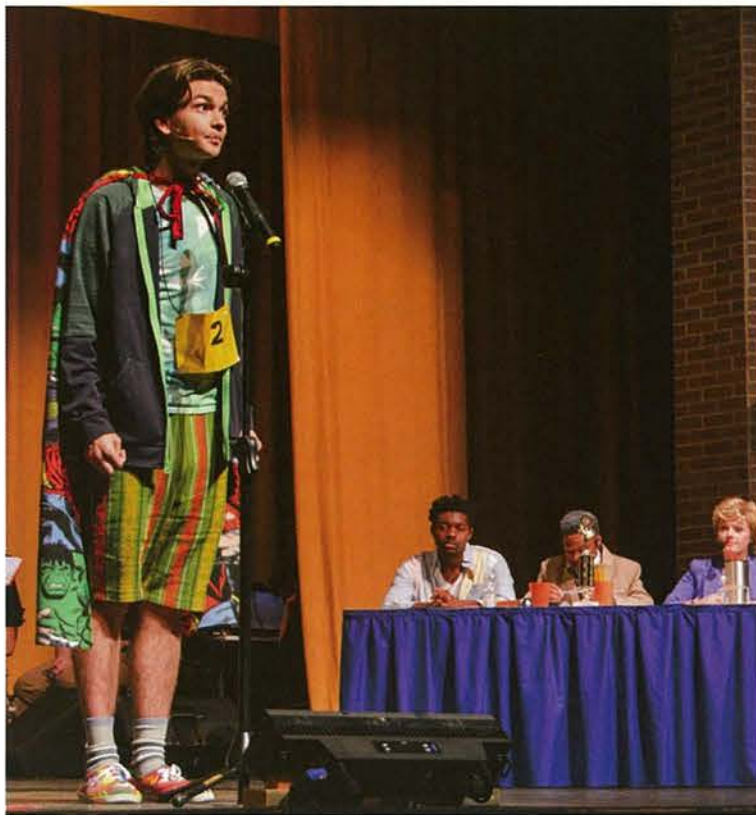
“It’s important to stay connected and get to know people from other generations. You get that exposure of what Missouri Western was like and what it’ll be in the future. I definitely would encourage everyone to attend,” said Cunning.

There is no fee to join the Alumni Association, but there is one requirement: graduate!





The 25th Annual Putnam County Spelling Bee revolves around the story of six kids. Putnam debuted on Broadway in 2005.



Above: Joseph Kellogg spells a word. Kellogg played Leaf Coneybear, a kidish character who had several personalities.

Western has a history of incredible productions. From “The Producers” to “Of Mice and Men,” Western’s theatre department has continuously brought new and exciting entries to audiences. While the bigger productions are the ones focused on more, the smaller ones bring their own unique flair. During the fall semester, The 25th Annual Putnam County Spelling Bee did just that.

The production is a fairly new one, not just to Western, but to theatre in general. It debuted in 2005 on Broadway and ran for 1,136 performances. The show revolves around six kids who compete in the bee, along with the three adults who reside over it.

Throughout the show, more is revealed about each character’s life and motivations. Raven Reed, The actress who plays Schwartz, believes it is a show that is all about the development.

“There is a lot in the characters that not everyone will be able to get by just looking at them as ten year olds at a spelling bee,” Reed said. “The characters are very in depth when it comes to what is going on.”

With such a character driven production,

the cast had to make sure they were in tune with their characters in order to make it work. The cast members focused on each individual character; developing their personality, quirks and habits before being with everyone to work on their chemistry as a group.

The goal of the cast was to make sure each character’s story was told according to actress Abby Sexton.

“The show tells the story of such younger kids,” Sexton said. “It’s fun to reflect on each of those characters and see elements of yourself in them that remind you of how you were at that age. It’s like revisiting your childhood while still getting to tell that story.”

Putnam County and smaller productions like it may lack the theatrics of bigger shows, but they have all the heart. It’s a production that truly brings out everything that the cast has to offer and puts their talents on full display. Antonio Daniels-Brazil, who plays Vice Principal Panch, hopes that more and more students will become involved.

“You can start anywhere really, just go and audition,” he said. “Be prepared, be well rehearsed and just love it.”

Blurred Vision



Dot talks to her mother about her visit to the doctor. Dot feared losing her vision.

Comedy and drama are two words to sum up Missouri Western's take on the production "Blur". The humorous play, written by Melanie Marnich, told the story of Dot Di Prima, a girl who discovers she is gradually losing her vision due to a genetic disease she inherited from her mother.

Dot went through the harsh reality of slowly losing her sight, the audience was entertained by the simple, whimsy set design and witty humor of the cast.

The play, directed by Kansas City based actress Katie Kalahurka, took around 5-6 weeks to prepare for. Each character had his or her unique quirks and mannerisms that further drew the audience in.

Dot struggled to stay positive while losing her vision, her mother, played by Carol Myers, spent the first part of the play doing her best to shelter her daughter from learning the harsh truth that she had passed down the genetic disease.

Myers, who has previously directed at Western, enjoyed working with a small cast and playing a role that greatly differed from her personal life.

"I love straight, serious roles and my character has never gone crazy or acted irrationally, so that was a treat to do that," Myers said. "I'd like to think I'm not crazy and neurotic and overbearing like she is, but I understand where she came from because she obviously didn't have it easy and that's not my life. My life is pretty picket fenced and peaches and cream. She just had a much harder life than I ever had."

Freshman Cole Kurcz, who played the role of Dot's boyfriend Joey, enjoyed playing a lead role that gave him an opportunity to show his skills and what he could do.

"What I loved most about this production would be, probably, the character that I had to play," Kurcz said. "It was fun playing someone who's sweet at the beginning and

the one scene where I get pissed off is a complete 180 and most people don't get to see that side of me very much which is pretty cool."

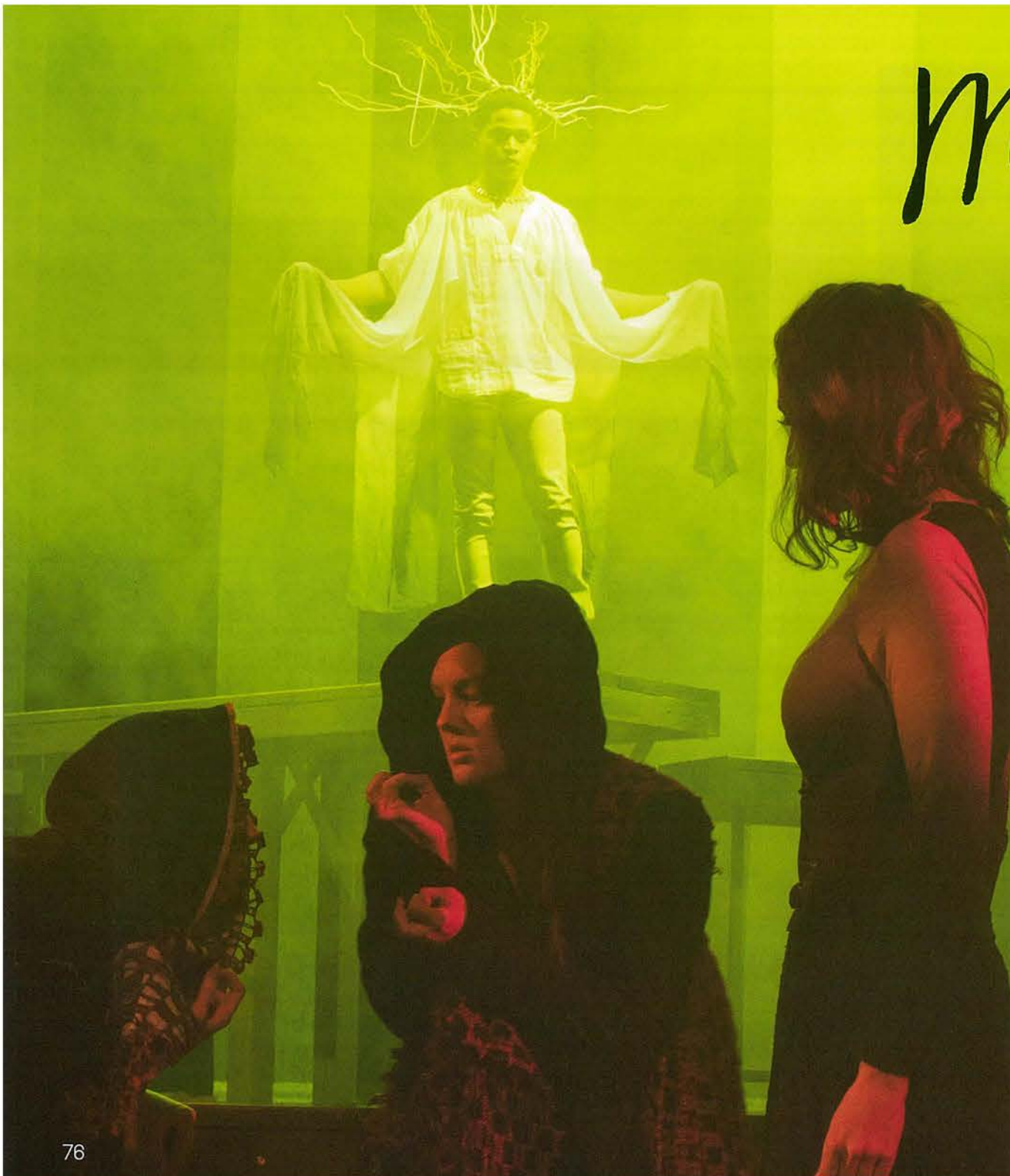
The casual and simplistic set design allowed for the audience to focus on the charismatic characters and the memorable scenes.

"We had lots of laughs and everyone loves the confetti, party popper scene and that's one of my favorite scenes," Kurcz said. "Most people have never seen me act that way before and especially doing it in front of my parents was really interesting for them to see, but it always got everyone laughing."

"Blur" ended on a positive note with Dot discovering a newfound sight of happiness and adventure she had been missing. The production delivered more than a few laughs but also a good message of discovering life, hope and new experiences through love and friendship.



Top: Izzy Wussow plays the character of Dot for the production of *Blur*. Dot argued with her mother about lying to her.
Left: Precious Hemphill has a discussion with Dot. Hemphill played a friend of Dot's and served comedic humor.



Macbeth

Left: The witches Abby Sexton, Kara McGhee and Annie Valuska plan a prophecy while Antonio Daniels-Braziel stands behind them. The trio of witches all played multiple roles.

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Top: Elisabeth Staak, Libby Denny, Megan Hanley and Abby Sexton plot a murder. The cast had both old and fresh faces on the stage.

Middle Top: Antonio Daniels-Braziel gets emotional during a monologue. Braziel played Lady Macbeth in the show.

Middle Bottom: Two murderers, Abby Sexton and Annie Valuska hold swords in front of Charles Skyles. Sexton was the fight captain for the show.

Bottom: The characters have dinner while a spirit is haunting. The spirit brought fear to Macbeth (Shira Murphy).

The 2016-17 MWSU theatre season continued with the production of Shakespeare's famous work, "Macbeth."

The production used minimal stage effects but was full of unique aspects, like director Tee Quillin's unusual casting choices. The cast was predominantly female, with a woman playing the main male character. Shira Murphy led with the role of Macbeth, while Antonio Daniels-Braziel played as Lady Macbeth.

Unlike the Shakespearean days, MWSU's production is a reversed tribute to the play. Back then, women weren't allowed onstage. Instead, male actors were cast in multiple roles, and played both male and female parts.

Antonio Daniels-Braziel is a theatre major and a familiar face on the Western stage. He said the experience of him ever having to gender-swap again in his career is incredibly low so he was happy to have the chance.

"It wasn't too much of a challenge, I just had to remind myself not to act like a man playing a woman and expel gender all together by just playing the character," Daniels-Braziel said.

Many hours were spent preparing for the performance. Junior Abby Sexton, who played multiple parts in the play, rehearsed on and off the stage to learn her character.

"There is a lot of character development because each character has its own thought process," Sexton said. "It's kind of hard to go from one to the other so quickly because you

have to immediately get into the mindset of that other character."

However, Sexton added that it's fun to have a different thought process of the storyline and be able to see the show from different character's perspectives.

Sexton also said that she hoped the audience would take away an enjoyable show.

With its Shakespearean language, it can sure capture an audience's attention.

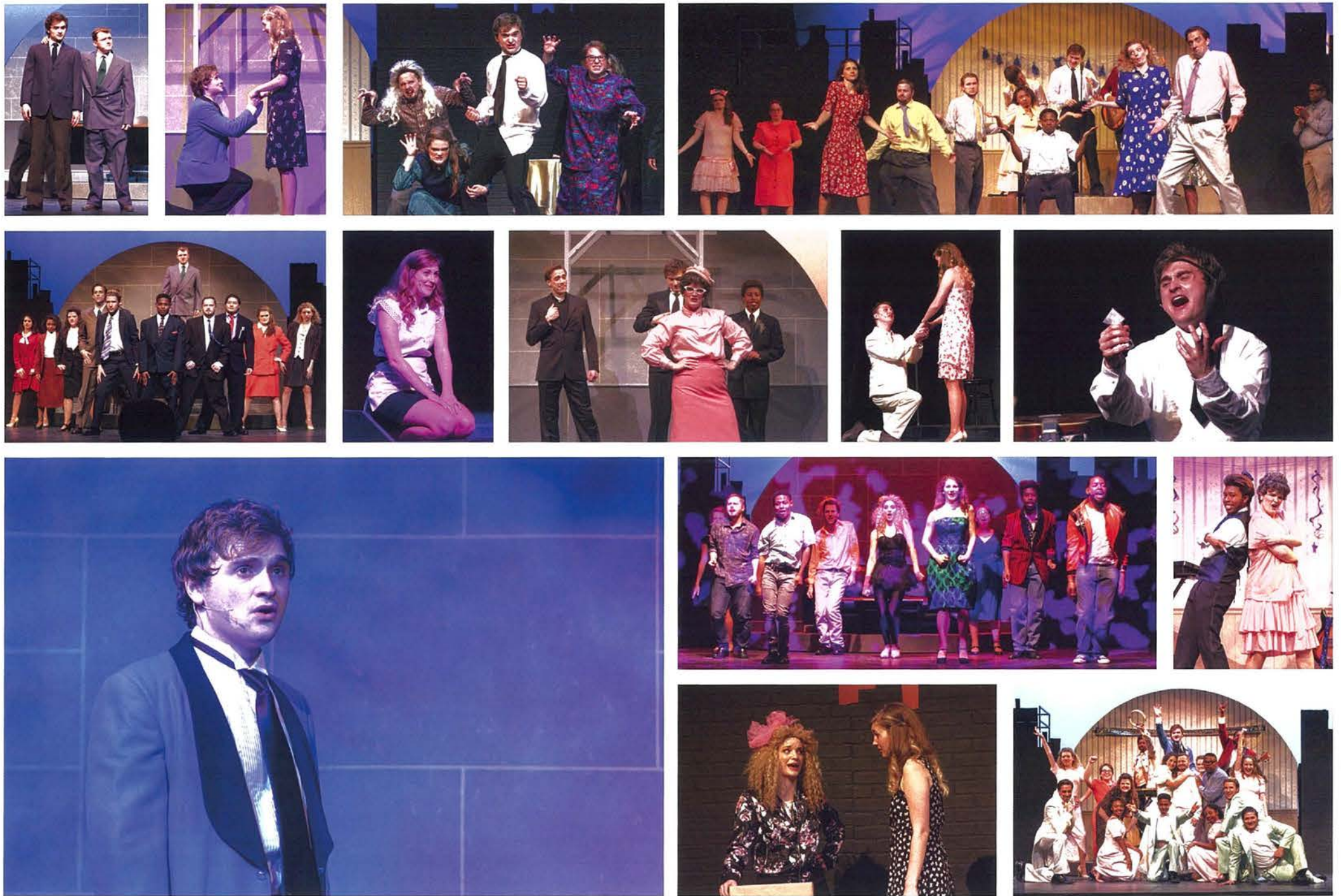
"I hope the audience walks away from this show realizing that not all theatre is glitter and bubblegum," Sexton said. "There are those dramatic stories, and especially with it being Shakespeare, I really just want them to walk away enjoying the story that we are telling."

Audience member, Cami Pendleton, watched as her friends performed and enjoyed the show.

"The gender roles were swapped which was really cool," Pendleton said. "The cast just had this energy that was really great; it was awesome."

The production of "Macbeth" is a story about a Scottish general, Macbeth, who is enticed with power and responsibility. After a trio of witches inform Macbeth he will become king, Lady Macbeth tells him he must murder King Duncan and he seizes the throne. The murder drives Macbeth mad, causing him to become a tyrannical ruler and commit murder after murder. The murder spree catapulted Lady Macbeth's and Macbeth's deaths.





Missouri Western's theatre department channeled the 80's with the production of *The Wedding Singer*. The cast rehearsed five days a week to learn choreography, lines and music.

The Wedding Singer

A Broadway adaptation of one of Adam Sandler's classic movies, "The Wedding Singer," made its way to the Potter Hall stage at Missouri Western. Cast and crew practiced for hours on end nearly every day for months leading up to the production to prepare.

The story follows Robbie Hart, played by Matt Ulmer, who is the lead of a wedding band and lives in his grandmother's basement. Robbie is determined to settle down with the woman he loves, as he has seen so many others do at the weddings he performs at. But, when Robbie's turn at the altar comes up, his bride-to-be leaves him there.

Robbie's true love he pursues after his heartbreak, Julia Sullivan, was played by Kelsey Garber, said she prepared for the role with her own form of method acting.

"I generally approach my roles using a psychological method," Garber said. "I create the backstory and establish the inner workings of my character's mind, and then once I have a solid grasp of that, the physicality of the character usually comes naturally."

Julia's cousin and best friend in the musical, Holly, played by Raven Reed, said her own method for preparation is a little more straightforward for this role.

"I do some breathing exercises or listen to music, but for this show, since she (Holly) is fun and flirty, I just made sure to talk a lot in the dressing room and be my extroverted

self," Reed said.

"The Wedding Singer" has a much more comical and relaxed tone than some previous, more dramatic productions, such as MacBeth, and brings some healthy diversity to the theatre season. Robert Vardiman played Sammy, one of Robbie's two bandmates, and expressed the fun he and his fellow cast members had with the production.

"The most fun part of the show was getting to do it with some really great friends. The other cast members are so awesome, and some of us have done shows together in the past, it's so great that we get to do another one together," Vardiman said.

Garber echoed Vardiman's sentiments and added that the production also highlighted changes that are occurring within the School of Fine Arts off the stage.

"I really enjoyed working with a lot of wonderful and talented people! We also had a lot of new faces participating in this musical and I just love to see the growth of our theater department," Garber said.

However, these large productions are not without their difficulties. Preparation for "The Wedding Singer" required nightly practices and the occasional complete rehearsal up until one week prior to finals. The cast and crew who were involved had to prioritize their time properly in order to assure they were dotting all of their "i's."

"The most challenging thing as always is the equal balance between work, school, and the show," Vardiman said. "Finding enough

time to do all of them is always a struggle."

Sometimes understanding and "becoming" your character can be the more challenging undertaking in a production, even more so than balancing a full load in multiple arenas. Reed said at times taking on the role made her empathize with individuals who may be characterized similarly in their real lives.

"Having to play such a raw character who is sexualized and just thought of as a flirtatious blonde was the most challenging part of this production," Reed said. "It was hard having that each night at rehearsals and learning what it's like to be viewed in that way."

Despite the challenges, the cast and crew seem very pleased with the outcome of the production and its reception. The five showings had a good turnout and the crowd enjoyed the final product. Garber said that everyone she spoke with after the show expressed how much they enjoyed it. Vardiman said the positive feedback has been uplifting.

"So far the crowds have been extremely responsive and they're loving it," Vardiman said. "I constantly get praise from audience members about the entire cast, and that's so great because we love it and it's nice to hear when we do well."

After such warm receptions, it will be exciting to see what the next theatre season has in store.



Cronkite: A Multimedia Performance

Jim Korinke plays the role of Walter Cronkite in the Western born *Cronkite, a Multimedia Performance*. Korinke has worked as an actor in Kansas City and North Western Missouri for more than 30 years.

Walter Cronkite a visionary; a kid from St. Joe; a journalist with high integrity known for delivering the news with honesty and grace. Considered a momentous figure in history, Cronkite has made an impact on the lives of many Americans, one of which is Western's president, Dr. Robert Vartabedian.

"He was in my opinion one of the most significant figures of the 20th century; his life is worth celebrating, particularly today," said Vartabedian. "I don't think we'll ever see his equal in journalism again. He's one person the more I study the more I admire him in terms of being a journeyman journalist who really understood his craft from a young age."

To celebrate Cronkite, Vartabedian wrote an artistic one-person, 22-minute multimedia performance that depicted an interview Larry King did with Cronkite on the "Larry King Live" show a year after the tragic events of September 11, 2001. Vartabedian adapted the transcript from the interview to a stage performance that involved an actor playing Walter Cronkite along with visual aids on film screens and audio of the original interview.

With the help of Western's Dean of Fine Arts Dr. Bob Willenbrink and Western Institute's Dean and Executive Director Gordon Mapley a technical and musical team were created.

In search of Cronkite, the production team held auditions locally in St. Joseph in addition to larger cities such as St. Louis and Kansas City before deciding on Kansas City based actor, Jim Korinke. Korinke, a 47-year professional actor, said after reading the script he felt connected to Cronkite and was lucky to be part of this show.

"When they called to offer me the role I just leapt to at the opportunity to do it," Korinke said. "The rest has been the best ride of my professional career. I've have never been associated with anything that I consider this important."

The success of "Cronkite" quickly took off, leading the Western team to take the show to the Lincoln Center in New York City, the Newseum in Washington D.C. and Kansas City. Willenbrink describes the experience of taking the show to other venues as exciting and rewarding.

"We were excited to share this with people of New York. Doing it near the Lincoln Center gave it credibility and value to our name being in New York with the Cronkite's and others. That kind of exposure is invaluable," Willenbrink said.

Vartabedian stated the success of the show does not end with the trips out of state last year, but that there has been interest from various talent agents from California and New York with an opportunity to make it an off Broadway production. Although thrilled at this opportunity, Vartabedian is hesitant to get too excited about the idea, as the difficulty of making it in the theatre industry can be very difficult. He said that he will stay hopeful and looks forward to this being a positive experience for Western and others who admire Cronkite.

Looking to the future Vartabedian and Willenbrink both hope for wonderful opportunities to come from the success of the show whether it draws people to Western or makes a new generational connection to Cronkite.

"My vision for it [Cronkite] was always this is a way for people to know Missouri Western in a positive light. This is a way to bring people to our campus to understand history and who we are and what our personal commitment is," Willenbrink said.

"Cronkite" was nominated for a 2015 Pulitzer Prize and is currently entered in a script in a 'free speech' contest at Penn State University. Vartabedian and Willenbrink hope for the best and encourage students that have yet to see the show to do so when the opportunity comes around again.







PHOTO W. RACHAEL BERGERON DESIGN W. JONI THOMAS

Dueling

Dueling pianos was a little bit country, a little bit rock n' roll and everything in between as the fun of a piano bar was brought right here to Western.

Piano bars are typically bar entertainment where two or more musicians will play the piano and take song requests from the crowd. The twist is that it's not just covers of popular songs; it's more about comedy than sounding perfect.

At a piano bar, when the musicians get a song request, they replicate it to the best of their abilities, usually by trying to play the song by ear. The musicians play song requests, however they aren't concerned with trying to blow anyone away with singing or playing prowess. The comedic effect is added either by the way the song is sung or from the outrageousness of the request.

Many students didn't know what they were getting themselves into with this event. Some thought it was going to be some kind of piano competition, while others simply had no clue what it was going to be.

"I heard about Dueling Pianos through the advertising in Blum," Western student Bernice Brown said. "I was expecting it to be more classical



Pianos


music, but I still enjoyed it. I liked that they took requests; I wasn't expecting it to be as personal as it was. I would love to see more events like this on campus in the future."

Once the musicians got the students into the swing of how a piano bar worked, the whole atmosphere changed. The crowd got involved and the song requests, which really made the night, came in faster and became more outrageous.

"I have never been to an event like this and I didn't get much information before the event, so I had no idea what to expect," freshman Kaitlyn Caldwell said. "I loved it because we got to pick the songs that made the set. I really liked when they did the Spice Girls song."

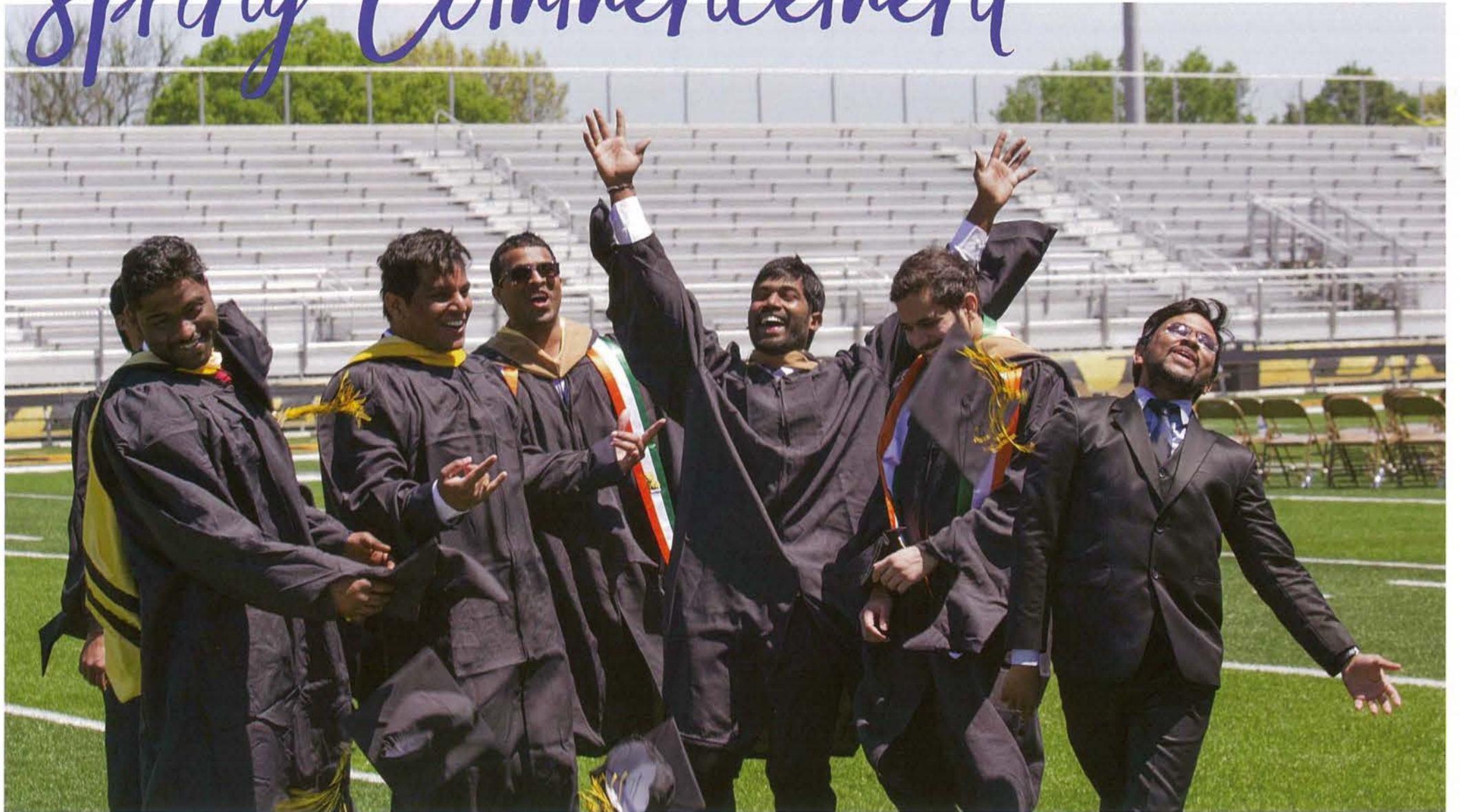
From Disney classics to old time country songs, the requests really put the musicians through their paces. Even new pop hits and rap songs were fair game, with their Fetty Wap cover being a crowd favorite.

The event gave students a fun chance to have experience a piano bar without having to be 21. While many of the students may not have known what they were getting into, the musical comedy stylings will be sure to make them come back for more.



Musicians challenge each other during Western's Dueling Pianos event. The event mimicked piano bars that have become popular forms of entertainment.

Spring Commencement





After four years, hundreds of study hours and a few dozen mental breakdowns, I was finally at my commencement ceremony.

I arrived on campus at 9:30am with my cap firmly bobby-pinned and not nearly enough coffee in my system. As my friends and colleagues arrived in their caps and gowns, I started realizing that this was really happening... I was actually graduating today and I had made it.

For me it was a moment of relief and pride. I'd struggled with depression and anxiety since I was a pre-teen, and there was time in my life when I honestly didn't think I was going to make it to this moment.

College had been a very finicky roller coaster the past four years. I could look back and remember moments of pure bliss, like becoming Editor-in-Chief of this fine publication you are currently reading (*The Griffon*). There were also moments of great stress, like actually acting as the Editor-in-Chief of a college publication.

Missouri Western gave me so many opportunities that I'm grateful for. I was able to travel for school conferences to places like Washington D.C., Philadelphia and New York

without financial concern. For a person who grew up eating rice and beans for months straight, being given opportunities like this has been a dream come true.

Getting to work with three student publications is something I would have never done at a larger school, like Mizzou, either. And of course, meeting the love of my life was something that never would have happened if I'd actually landed my "dream school" instead of coming Western. Western gave me a lifetime of experience in just four short years.

While it was a rough ride at times, it was definitely one I didn't regret as I marched onto the field on commencement day. I was side-by-side with my friends, my family was cheering for me in the crowd and it was an absolutely gorgeous day. I couldn't have asked for a better commencement.

Of course there was the inconvenience of sitting in the summer heat in an all black robe for an hour and a half, but it was worth it when I heard my name called and I walked across the stage. And what better way to end my time here? Watching the drunk guy behind me try to discretely pee in a water bottle in the middle of the ceremony. I expected no less from my alma mater.





Farewell Dr. Hunt

Dr. Marilyn Hunt, chair of the Communication & Journalism department, colleague and friend, is ending her near twenty-year tenure at Missouri Western State University this year. Drawing from her incredibly varied experience both personally and professionally, Hunt taught a wide range of classes during her career with distinction. Her favorite was Organizational Communication. She enjoyed building on her previous graduate work and research at California State University of Los Angeles (CSULA) that looked at organizational relationships by explaining how those between supervisors and subordinates flourish and falter.

Maybe that knowledge is what helped Dr. Hunt understand her students so well and drew them to her.

“Dr. Hunt is someone that brings joy and excitement to the department every single day,” former student and program alumni Alex Atkinson said. “Multiple times she met with me before, between or late after classes to help me with classes and projects or just to discuss topics we covered. I’m sad to see her leave Western, but she has without a doubt

left her mark on our campus.”

Current student Ali Fowler reiterated Atkinson’s sentiments,

“Dr. Hunt is very knowledgeable while being personable. She is very easy to talk to and learn from. The department will miss her but she has definitely earned her retirement!”

Even after so many years teaching communications, Dr. Hunt still enjoys interacting with students and staying current on the ever shifting trends in the industry:

“It has been gratifying to talk with students and read their research over the years as they reflected on the changing views of leadership and followership.”

Originally from Kansas, Hunt moved to California in the late 70’s to complete her undergraduate degree. During her fifteen years in California, Hunt lived in Altadena, Long Beach, Alhambra, Seal Beach, Downy, Newport Beach, and West Los Angeles.

Hunt served as Field Office Manager for United Professors of California, worked a part-time summer job driving a bread truck for Oroweat Bakery that necessitated getting up at 4:30 a.m. to deliver product

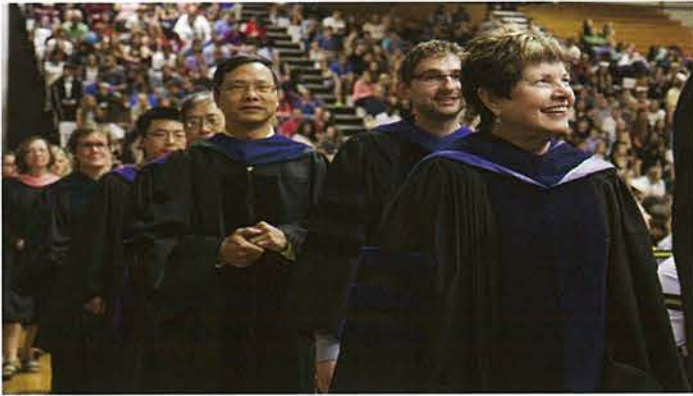
to grocery stores all over L.A., and served as an instructor at LA Southwest College (Watts), Cerritos College (Norwalk), Pasadena City College and CSULA, somehow finding time to compete in the Rose Bowl half marathon.

Hunt finished her Ph.D. at the University of Kentucky in 1994 and arrived just a few years later at Western with the goal of getting her students as prepared as possible to make immediate impacts at their new organizations post graduation.

Hunt says she will miss the energy the students give off the most; they challenge her to look at things from new perspectives and invigorate her to seek new answers,

“Connecting with students and learning about the lives they lead has been a privilege. I will miss hearing about how communication theories and constructs apply to their lived experience.”

Entering retirement Hunt is looking forward to traveling, remodeling her home, contributing more to the community and, of course, continuing to learn. Now, there’s the added perk that it is all at her own pace, and every day is a new adventure.



Dr. Marilyn Hunt marches in for the winter commencement. Hunt was the chair of the communications department.



Dr. Marilyn Hunt poses with other retirees, Debbie Johnson, Marsha Dolan and Joanne Katz. Hunt spent 20 years at Missouri Western before retiring in July.



Dr. Marilyn Hunt laughs during a lecture. Hunt enjoyed teaching and engaging with students.



Latoya Fitzpatrick

In the three years Latoya Fitzpatrick has served as Director of the Center for Multicultural Education (CME) the programming put on by the center has expanded greatly and affected the whole of Missouri Western.

Fitzpatrick found her way to working in student affairs professionally via an unlikely path: a chemistry degree. While she was originally interested in applying to pharmacy school after finishing her undergraduate degree, she was unaware of certain challenges and criteria that would rise up to meet her along her journey.

Fitzpatrick was the first in her family to attend a four year institution and because of this lacked counsel to help guide her. This, coupled with her positive experience as a resident assistant and some kind advice from a supervisor, pushed her towards her chosen career path.

“When I was an undergrad I was a resident assistant, and once I realized I wasn’t going to pharmacy school I broke down in my advisor’s office, I broke down in my supervisor’s office,” Fitzpatrick said. “Then my supervisor asks if I had I thought about student affairs, and i was like, ‘I don’t even know what student affairs is.’”

Laughing, Fitzpatrick said when she realized what student affairs encompassed

she immediately thought it could be a good potential fit for her.

“My supervisor said ‘you’re kind of doing it now as a resident assistant,’ and i mean i don’t want to brag on myself but I think I was a pretty good resident assistant,” Fitzpatrick said. “I still have students that message me saying i was the best they ever had.”

One of the students who works for Fitzpatrick, Alexis Williams, expressed her admiration for the work Fitzpatrick does as well as her thankfulness for her guidance.

“She strives to make sure all minorities, whether it be women, Hispanics, blacks, LGBTQ, feel empowered, and she tries her best to support and make programs that revolve around everyone,” Williams said. “My first year I was really depressed and stayed in my room, and I did not talk to anyone. She saw that I had a voice and good ideas from coming into the office all the time. So, she encouraged me to get a job in her office. Once I applied for the job and she hired me, I saw so many opportunities and programs I wasn’t interested in before. She really helped make my college experience a worthwhile experience.”

Fitzpatrick has implemented and expanded many programs on campus to educate, inform and empower, but one that she says is of particular importance

is the Martin Luther King Jr. Drum Major For Justice Banquet that is held every year despite MLK week now landing during the first week of the semester.

“I think each year it has gotten better,” Fitzpatrick said. “I’m always panicked that people will not sign up because now we start classes the week of MLK week and usually you have to have your numbers to catering the week before. So we’re scrambling to get people to sign up but then magically, it seems, we have over the amount of people that probably should sign up.”

The banquet not only has a formal meal and a positive message, but it is normally attended by a large number of administrators and faculty, as well as President Vartabedian in several years past, so Fitzpatrick views it as an warranting extra attention.

The CME programming has been refined and expanded, and Fitzpatrick’s supervisor, Assistant Dean of Student Development Isaiah Collier, believes it is only just the beginning for both Latoya and the CME.

“I envision the CME will grow beyond measure and Latoya will continue to challenge individuals to join her on this ride of exploring, understanding and celebrating various cultures looking through the social justice lens of society,” Collier said.



What about Bob?





Dr. Robert “Bob” Willenbrink was named Dean of the newly formed School of Fine Arts at Missouri Western State University in 2013.

Willenbrink received a Ph.D. in theatre from Bowling Green State University and a MA from Morehead State University and has directed over 80 productions that vary in style, message and venue.

Getting involved in the School of Fine Arts from the days of its inception has allowed Willenbrink to see and experience the growth and change that is ongoing.

“The school has grown in a number of ways,” Willenbrink said. “Physically, we were able to renovate this building so that it looks much better. We’ve been able to explore and expand our programs, change the degrees

“I ENJOY, THE MOST, WORKING WITH PEOPLE, WORKING WITH FELLOW ARTISTS. THERE’S ALWAYS SOMETHING GOING ON.”
QUOTE \ \ BOB WILLENBRINK

somewhat; we were able to add more faculty to enhance the educational experience of our students.”

Willenbrink was most proud of these changes and the continual addition of new faculty and facilities because of the impact it has on the education process as a whole.

“We’re able to serve the students better; that’s been the greatest accomplishment.”

One other project Willenbrink has been heavily involved in is the acclaimed one-man multimedia performance he originally directed entitled Cronkite, so named for the famed news anchor whose memorial is housed at Western.

Jeff Stover, Chair of the Department of Theatre, Cinema & Dance, has been working with Willenbrink since his first days here and has also been heavily involved with Cronkite.

“I believe that it (Cronkite) was well received by the patrons who have come to see it. It is a labor of love for many that are involved.”

Willenbrink works on much more than

just theatre productions, however, and the work is both audible and visible the moment you set foot in Potter Hall, home of the School of Fine Arts.

“I enjoy, the most, working with people, working with fellow artists. There’s always something going on. You hear music; you see dance. That’s the best part of my job is the people and the things that go on and the opportunity to see our students grow and perform.”

Under Willenbrink’s guidance, the School of Fine Arts has continually produced high quality content and flourished. As he continues his tenure he hopes to continue this tradition and emphasize the important role of the arts in the lives of everyone.

“From the moment you wake up until the time you go to bed your life is influenced by art ... The arts are the core of our existence.”



Left: Bob Willenbrink sits at his desk finishing some busywork. Bob has been the dean of the School of Fine Arts since 2013.





Dr. John Tapia is known to many on Western's campus for his Hawaiian shirts, a red solo cup in hand and his knowledge on all things rhetoric.

Tapia first came to Western in 1976 after completing his Ph.D. at the University of Arizona. There he majored in Speech Communication with a focus in American Public Address and Rhetorical Theory, and minored in American History and Statistics.

"JOHN TAPIA IS AN EXCEPTIONAL PROFESSOR, COLLEAGUE AND FRIEND AND I WISH HIM THE BEST IN HIS RETIREMENT. HE DESERVES IT."
QUOTE \ DR. MARILYN HUNT

In the years since, Tapia has taught many upper and lower division communication courses, such as "Oral Communication," "Road to the White House," "Interpersonal Communication" and his famous "Survey of Rhetorical Theory." He is also become of numerous national organizations, such as the National Communication Association, Central States Communication, Rhetoric Society

of America and the International Rhetoric Society.

Dr. Tapia has mentored and connected with many of his students, peers and colleagues at Western. Dr. Marilyn Hunt, who is also retiring this year, has been a colleague of Tapia's for over 20 years now.

"John Tapia is an exceptional professor, colleague and friend and I wish him the best in his retirement. He deserves it," Hunt said.

Among everything Dr. Tapia has accomplished, he still somehow found time to publish over 30 professional articles and present at over 70 academic conferences around the United States.

"My biggest professional accomplishment are my personal publications because I put so much time and thought into each of them," Tapia said.

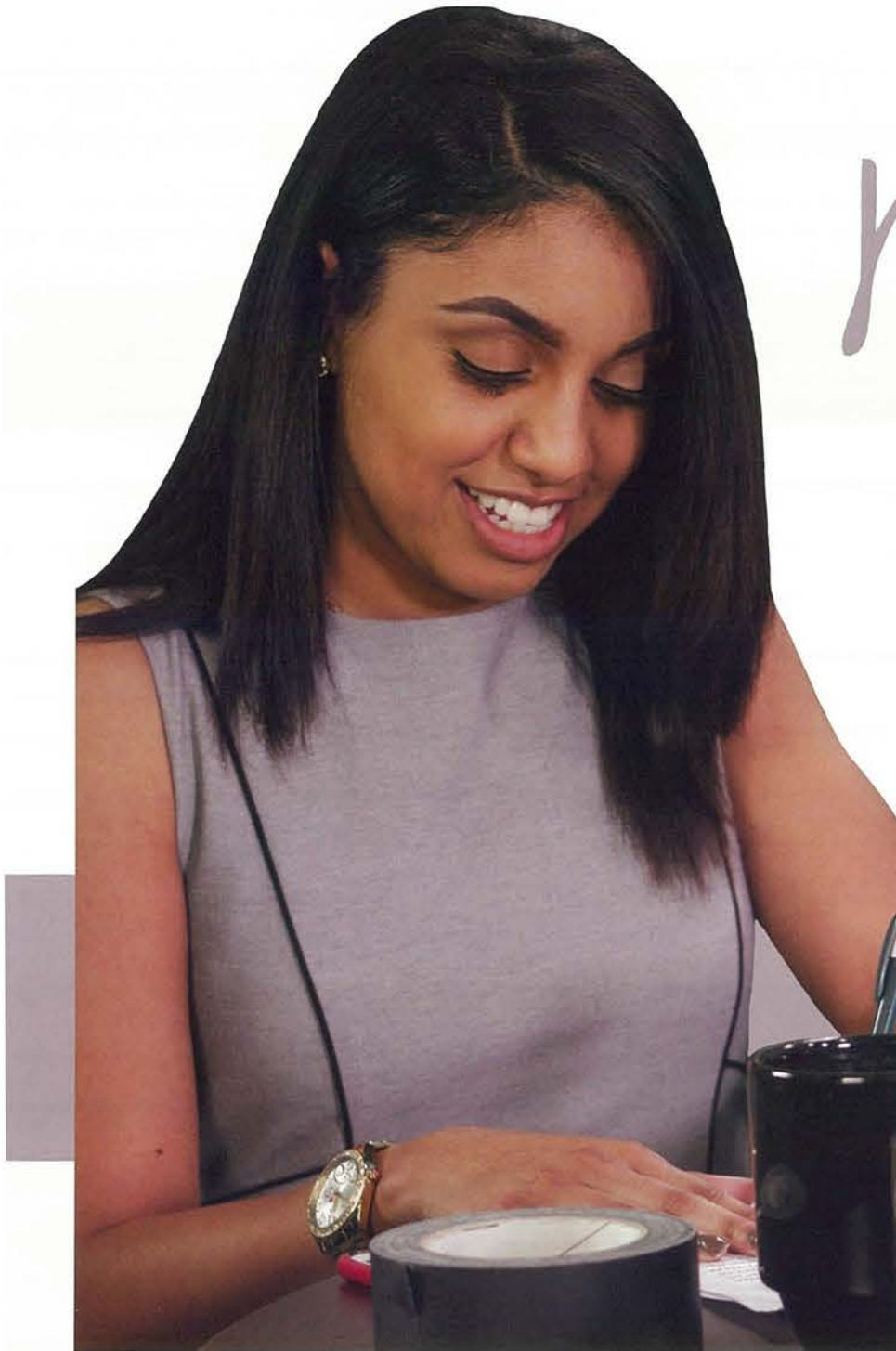
After retirement Tapia plans to focus on his farm in Faucett, MO and his collection of 32 antique cars.

"I have always had a niche for antique cars and now that I am in retirement I can focus on repairing them and attending cars show in the area. I have even thought about starting a car tour," Tapia said.

Dr. John Tapia feeds his miniature donkey and pony. Tapia collected antiques for his home.







Mrs. ESPN

Who inspires us is why we take the first step. What inspires us is what continues to drive us to success. For Western senior Amaree Martin that person was her high school biology professor, Mr. Hymel, who helped Martin discover her passion for sports reporting.

It was during homecoming week her senior year at Carl Albert High School in Midwest City, Oklahoma that Amaree Martin had her “ah-ha” moment and discovered her life plan. Martin was asked to fill in as an announcer during a show that was themed around ESPN. After stepping off the stage full of excitement, Mr. Hymel told her he could see her on ESPN, and that’s when Martin set the wheel in motion.

Realizing that she wasn’t an all-star basketball player Martin decided to emphasize the passion she did have for the sport by reporting about it instead. Martin’s goal is working as a sideline reporter and becoming a, NBA Analyst working directly with Sports Center and ESPN.

After high school graduation she decided to step out of her comfort zone and take a chance by becoming a Griffon despite the lack of a sports broadcasting program at Western. Freshman year Martin was advised to focus on speech communications because of her interest for television. According to Martin, focusing on Speech Communications

has been beneficial, but not without its challenges.

“As I progressed I realized I should have been a convergent media major. I have had to work so hard because I am not in that major or taking those classes,” says Martin. “Outside of my speech communication classes I’m trying to focus on making myself better video-wise without those classes. I’m doing extra to know more.”

Wrong major or not, Martin prides herself on her focus and not changing her major since starting at Western. She has grown significantly becoming better at talking, interviewing players and knowing sports on a different level. Martin claims that due to the competitive nature of sports broadcasting, knowing details in all sports is crucial to the success of a sports reporter.

Studying weeks in advance about how players performed and how many points they scored is part of the research process that Martin takes before an interview. Asking where athletes are from and how they got started are other ways that Martin tries to connect on a personal level during interviews and establish lasting relationships.

“It’s always fun to know someone’s story, that’s why I love interviewing people,” said Martin. “My go to question I always ask is who inspired you? It’s really important; it all starts off with who inspired you.”

To build up more experience in sports broadcasting Martin interns with KU2 and works on Griffon Update which includes her own show "1-on-1 with Amaree Martin." 1-on-1 was created by Martin in the fall of 2017 which demonstrates her initiative to succeed in her career. 1-on-1 is a sit down interview show where Martin speaks with athletes that are doing well in their sport.

With a few job prospects in the works, Martin says that she is willing to go anywhere but has high hopes to work for one of the top 30 stations. Ultimately she would love to go to Los Angeles or another big city that would offer an opportunity to work for Fox Sports or ESPN.

Sports broadcasting is a challenging field, and more so for women because it is male dominated industry. Martin has had plenty of experience researching this and has nothing but words of encouragement for others looking to break out into this field.

"Never give up...It's always going to be a little challenging for us [women] because guys are always going to think they know their sports. You need to know your stuff because that's what it's going to come down to," said Martin. "Never get discouraged, work hard because it is possible. Take criticism well because it does help and it's good to listen because it does help along the way."

Martin has spent the last four years

enhancing her communication skills through story telling, learning about sports broadcasting and networking with others in her industry. Although Western didn't have the program of her choice, it didn't stop her from leading the way and following her dreams.

"It's all a growing process and learning. Missouri Western helped me a lot," said Martin. "I thought 'if I'm going to do it, I'm going to have to start it up' so that's why I came up with my 1-on-1 segment."

Martin hopes that the program for broadcasting continues to grow. She has been told that there will be a sports show next semester and is thrilled to know that she was able to open the door and pave the way to expand the sports on Griffon Update.

Tearing up when she spoke more intimately regarding her passion and dream path, Martin is thrilled with her journey thus far. She knows that it's her dedication, hard work and connections she's made that will help her succeed as a sports reporter.

"I've worked so hard and want it so bad. It's more than being on T.V. When you put so much time in to something you want to be so good at, that's when feelings start getting involved," said Martin. "When I really get into something I go all in or I don't go in at all. And this is something that I have to do."



Amaree Martin jokes with Bailey Ketchan while filming an episode of Griffon Update. Martin has hosted Update's sports segments for 4 years.

Marissa Steimel

Marissa Steimel's position as the Events and New Student Program Coordinator is one that is particularly important in a time when Missouri Western has seen a steady decline in student enrollment numbers.

Steimel comes to Missouri Western after attending the University of Missouri Saint Louis for her undergraduate degree and the University of Arkansas for her graduate degree, where she knew she wanted to continue her involvement in higher education. Steimel says she was looking for an institution to work at around the size of Missouri Western and that when she visited the choice made perfect sense.

"Almost immediately when I arrived on campus I said, 'yes, this is where I am going to be,'" Steimel said. "I have been on campuses where you are crammed in, so I really liked the open spaces. But, most importantly, once I actually started interviewing I loved the people. You could tell it was a family and they very much welcomed me."

The biggest undertakings Steimel oversees are Griffon Edge and Griffon Orientation, the former she is hoping to pump some new life into.

"I was hired to evaluate and to plan them (Griffon Edge and Griffon Orientation) as I would plan them but also to see what does the campus need," Steimel said. "So, came in

July 5th and basically had to oversee Griffon Edge last year. It's a great program, but I definitely saw some areas where I can take things from my different experiences and makes some improvements, like with faculty involvement. We're also working to get more traditions started. We're working on some traditions for the incoming class to create that they can take with them. It's going to be great."

"ALMOST IMMEDIATELY WHEN I ARRIVED ON CAMPUS I SAID, 'YES, THIS IS WHERE I AM GOING TO BE.'"

QUOTE \ MARISSA STEIMEL

Steimel's enthusiasm to build a culture at Missouri Western that will affect graduating classes years in the future is not lost on her coworkers.

"Anyone who has ever met Marissa knows that she is the most enthusiastic and outgoing person in the room!" Admissions Counselor Carolyn Kirchoff said. "Her energy, persistence and work ethic are just a few things that everyone in the Office of Admissions admires and respects about Marissa."

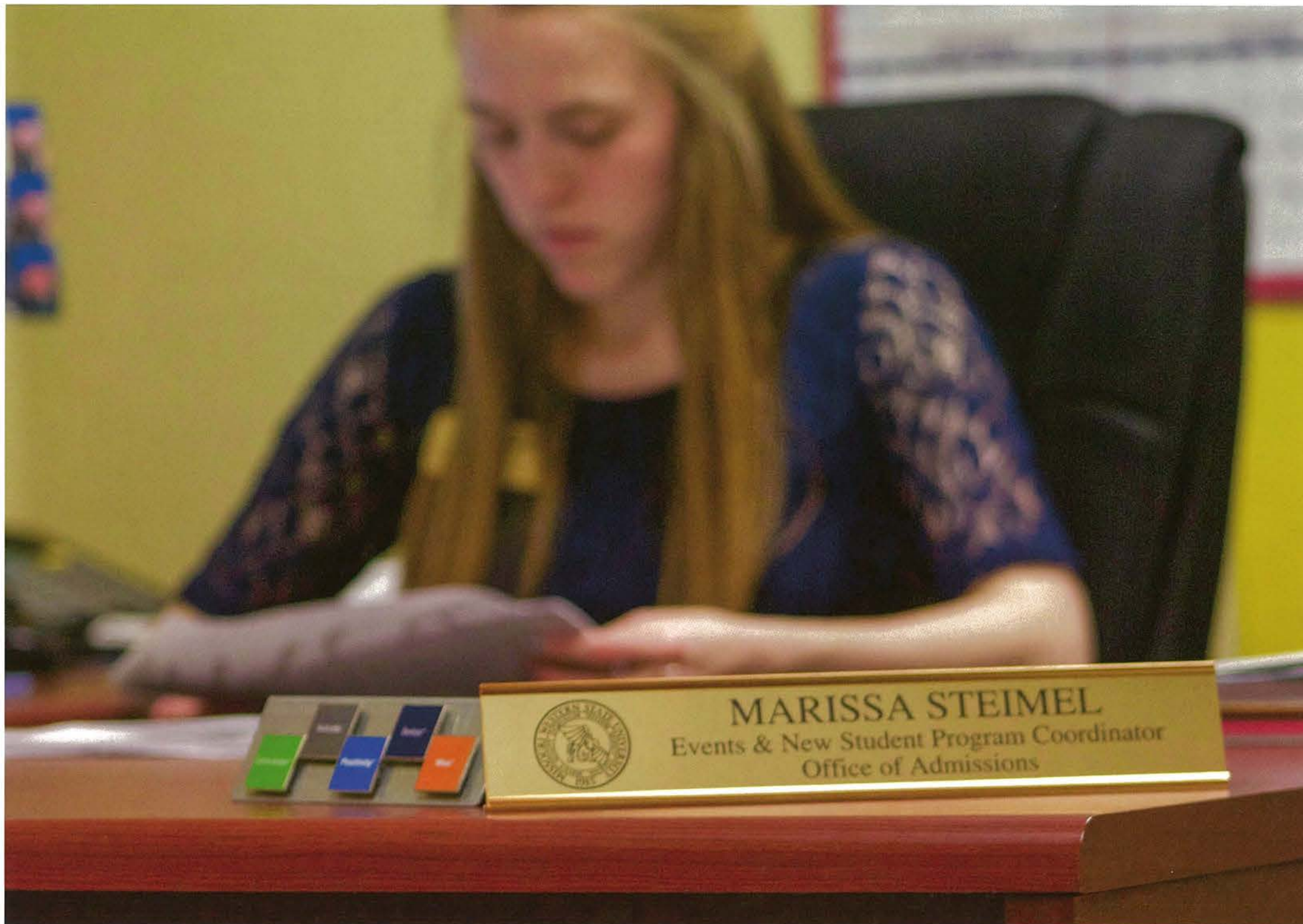
Kirchoff was not alone in her praise. Steimel's supervisor Dixie Williams, Associate Director of Admissions, Spoke to Steimel's passion for connecting with students.

"She not only does her job but serves as the Panhellenic Advisor (which is a volunteer position). She supports the sororities on campus through programs, meetings, etc. She is very student centered."

Steimel has hit the ground running in her new position and hopes to continue bolstering the attachment incoming freshmen feel towards Missouri Western.

"I'm most excited to show the students who have worked Griffon Edge in the past or gone to it how much of a difference even a little change can make," Steimel said. "They are already seeing it with Griffon Orientation. It was very process driven; it's more of a people driven process now. We're more focused on how are we acclimating you to campus during that full day program and putting the focus there because that will translate into some changes we're making in Griffon Edge."





Becoming Cronkite



Jim Korinke applies makeup to mimic the appearance of Walter Cronkite. Jim did not bear much resemblance to Cronkite before being hired as an actor for Missouri Western's *Cronkite: a Multimedia Performance*

“Cronkite was a true role model, a beacon of truth and integrity. I am so humbled and honored to have been chosen to portray him.” – Jim Korinke (Walter Cronkite in “Cronkite” trilogy) written by President Robert Vartabedian.

Jim Korinke played Walter Cronkite in Western’s “That’s The Way It Is” trilogy that depicted three separate experiences Cronkite had in his broadcast journalist career: Harry Truman presidency, the Civil Rights Movement and 9/11.

Korinke auditioned for the role as Cronkite in 2013 after a colleague brought the opportunity to him. Korinke stated that he never really thought that we would be thought of for such a role, but has been nothing but grateful since the beginning.

“When they called to offer me the role I just leapt at the opportunity to do it. The rest has been the best ride of my 47-year professional career. I have never been associated with anything that I consider this important.”

Raised in the small town of Nashua, Iowa, Korinke graduated in 1964 at the height of the Vietnam war with the hopes of going to college to be a guidance counselor or school teacher. After enlisting in the service where he worked for the National Security Agency, he realized his passion for world relations.

As a young teacher where he led his classes as if they were elaborate performances. He’d draw his students into a “show” as characters in history or psychology to teach them the material, which he said was very successful. It was at this stage in his life that someone came up to him and said he should be an actor, which led Korinke to participate in some community theater productions.

“CRONKITE WAS A TRUE ROLE MODEL, A BEACON OF TRUTH AND INTEGRITY.”

QUOTE \ \ JIM KORINKE

Korinke humbly explained that he happened to “be seen” by an agent that attended one of his shows and he graciously accepted and move to Los Angeles, California to act. By 1974, he moved to the Kansas City area with an acting company performing at the Kansas City Repertory Theatre. Moving between L.A. and Kansas City he worked as a voiceover actor for commercials and landed the national voice of the Honda Civic in 1976. He was also the voice of Walmart for four years.

Korinke describes his experience working on “Cronkite” as the craziest thing that ever happened to him and has found that he

relates to Cronkite on a personal level.

This was the first one-man show that Korinke has performed that represented an experience a character had versus who the character was in life. Sharing some of the same attributes. Selflessness and a strong work ethic, along with doing things for others, are all qualities that he believes he shares with legendary journalist.

“Walter is the first one [character] that the more you learn about him the more it goes outward, like a blossoming flower or a piece of fireworks. It just takes over and goes through you,” Korinke said.

Before a performance, becoming Cronkite is mostly a physical transformation for Korinke. He spends forty-five minutes coloring his hair, eyebrows and mustache. During his makeup preparation he reminds himself how selfless Cronkite was and how candid, knowledgeable, honest, and helpful he was in his discourse.

“I don’t know of anything else I’ve ever seen, certainly that I’ve ever been a part of, that is more important educationally, informatively, intelligently, logically to give us a base for how to conduct ourselves not only as people, as citizens, husbands and wives, and friends and neighbors, but as a nation in relationship to the other nations in the world than this show,” Korinke said.





Griffon to CEO



Esther George is the president and chief executive officer of the Federal Reserve Bank of Kansas City. George started as the Federal Reserve Bank chief operating officer in August 2009.

Missouri Western alumna Esther George is one Griffon who has flown to new heights following her graduation in 1980.

George, who is now the President and Chief Executive Officer of the Federal Reserve Bank of Kansas City, graduated Western with a B.S.B.A. degree in Business Administration.

After joining the Federal Reserve in 1982, George served much of her career in the Division of Supervision and Risk Management. She began as a commissioned bank examiner and eventually served as the District's chief regulator for 10 years. She was responsible of the District's state-chartered member banks and nearly 1,000 bank and financial holding companies. George had direct involvement in the Tenth District's banking supervision and discount window lending activities during the banking crisis of the 1980s and after 9/11.

George has served as a member of the Craig School of Business Advisory Board and the Foundation Board of Directors.

According to a past Griffon News article, former Craig School of Business Dean Philip Nitse said that George's accomplishments have shown the university's successes after graduation.

"WHEN AN ALUMNUS ACHIEVES THIS LEVEL OF SUCCESS, EVERYONE AT THE INSTITUTION SHOULD FEEL PRIDE, ESPECIALLY IN THE SENSE THAT THIS IS PROOF THAT THE EDUCATION PROVIDED HERE AT WESTERN IS OF SUCH QUALITY."

QUOTE \ PHILIP NITSE

"When an alumnus achieves this level of success, everyone at the institution should feel pride, especially in the sense that this is proof that the education provided here at Western is of such quality," Nitse said.

During her time at Western, George had the opportunity to study abroad. According to

a video on YouTube, George said it is one of the most memorable experiences she had at Western. She got to travel with her professors and other students from well-known universities.

On her trip, George traveled and visited with business and government institutions from other countries before writing a paper about her experience.

"That experience really had a big impression on me and really set me on the path of thinking about my role in a much larger way than I had up to that point," George said in the video.

George returned to Western to speak at the Spring Commencement in 2015. However, since George is an incredibly busy woman, she was not able to be contacted for this story.

Western has developed well-educated students that have secure and successful careers, but it is those like Esther George that are highly notable. She was able to prove that everything is possible at Western, just as many students are working toward now for their own futures.



Noor Tagouri

Erotic pictures and provocative captions are the things that tend to come to mind when someone hears the brand Playboy, but in late September Noor Tagouri shattered the raunchy stereotype by being the first woman in the magazine's history to be featured wearing a hijab.

Photographed for the magazine fully clothed and poised, Tagouri is a prominent American journalist, established speaker and an international advocate for social justice. The Center for Multicultural Education welcomed Tagouri to campus Nov. 15, to share her personal story and speak on overcoming obstacles.

Her journey all started with her hijab. The hijab is a headscarf traditionally worn by Muslim women as a sign of modesty and privacy. Among American Muslim women, the decision to wear a headscarf, burka or other traditional clothing comes with many social and cultural implications, and is at the sole discretion of the individual.

Tagouri did not always think she would wear hijab. As a child, she did not want to stand out or be different from her classmates. But as a Muslim American, Tagouri still knew she was different, and it embarrassed her.

Her mother was very involved in her school as a chaperone and even came and educated her classmates on Muslim culture from time to time.

"My mom would come to my school and share about Muslim culture, in her hijab, and she did it for about two years and stopped because I was completely mortified and

embarrassed," Tagouri said. "I remember praying my mom would forget to put on her hijab before coming to my school, because I didn't want to answer any questions about it. I was sure of two things around that time and one of them was that I would never put on the hijab."

As Tagouri grew into her teen years she realized that she didn't really know who she was. Everyone around her was embracing their identity, but she didn't have one yet. She felt broken and lost, so she put the hijab on as a challenge to herself to find out who she was.

Tagouri has not taken off her hijab since that day.

"I began to realize that nobody has any power over you unless you give it to them. I realized I was okay with my insecurities, and that I was different. Embrace your different, don't be scared of it," said Tagouri.

Her hijab opened the door to her self-discovery, and gave Tagouri the confidence to pursue her dreams as a journalist without fear of being judged. Tagouri's love of journalism began at the age of eight years old after spending weekday afternoons watching Oprah with her mother. After attending the Philip Merrill School of Journalism at the University of Maryland, Tagouri aspired to be the first hijabi woman on a commercial news station in the United States.

Tagouri's hijab also led to the birth of the #LetNoorShine campaign. The traditional Arabic name Noor means light, and in 2012 Tagouri launched the social media campaign

to encourage others to pursue their dreams. This increased Tagouri's international presence, making her one of the nation's most notable young adults.

"The purpose of LetNoorShine is to inspire other people to let their inner lights shine. It was absolutely amazing, because this journey ended up taking me all over the world; and the people online who were sharing the hashtag were able to share their journeys and their struggles and their pursuits," Tagouri said. "We became this community of bundles of passion and vulnerable spirits; I have never felt such a sense of freedom and purpose then from the moment I realized just being yourself gets you places."

Playboy fame aside, Tagouri's professional portfolio continues to grow. She is currently working as a producer and anchor for Newsy, an online broadcast news station based out of Columbia, MO and recently produced the investigative documentary 'The Trouble They've Seen: the Forest Haven Story.' She has also been featured on CNN, OWN and has traveled many parts of the world as she continues to grow her confidence-boosting campaign.



Noor Tagouri speaks to students about her achievements and struggles. Tagouri became the first woman to pose for Playboy while wearing a hijab.





As Spratt opened its doors for the third annual “The Voice” singing competition, and the theater started to fill, over a dozen nervous contestants were warming up backstage. Similar to the hit TV show, contestant sing blindly for three judges, are chosen (or not), and then continue to compete and train with the judge who chooses them.

Jeneay McDougall was one of the many hoping to turn heads that night, especially that of a certain judge.

“I have been in choir for twelve years, but this is my first time on ‘The Voice.’ I’m very confident in my voice,” said McDougall. “I hope to impress the judge Robert Vardiman, because he has been through this process before and will be a good mentor.” And that she did; Vardiman welcomed her to his team.

The night continued full of hip hop, pop, country and even heavy metal. The judges took interest in all forms of talent that night, including Breanna Hilton. Hilton turned all three judges’ heads, but she was only interested in one.

“I picked Chelsea Ham as my mentor because she is soft spoken like me and I feel we will work well together,” said Hilton. “Singing is just a hobby of mine, but if it takes me somewhere, it takes me somewhere.”

On the sidelines hosting the show were Pearl Sanchez and Mya Jackson.

“I’m a freshman so this was my first year

being involved in “The Voice.” It was so much fun and I cannot wait to see what other songs and hidden talents the contestants pull out in the rounds to come,” said Sanchez.

As the competition continued in the following weeks, some contestants excelled and some contestants were sent home. The final week three contestants battled for number one, and in the end, Briana Dice won that coveted spot.

Dice was mentored by Bob Willenbrink, who pushed her to be the best she could be and it payed off in the end... literally. She won \$1,000 for first place finish.

“When they called my name as the winner I just burst into tears. It’s just one of those moments where you’re in complete doubt. It was a good moment for me, and my parents especially. My parents have always loved to listen to me sing and progress over the years,” said Dice.

Moving forward, Dice plans to incorporate her music skills into a future career.

“I plan to continue going to Missouri Western to get my Bachelor’s in Psychology and I also plan on studying Music Therapy. I’d like to combine those two to work in a rehabilitation center and help teenagers who suffer from depression, anxiety, eating disorders, etc. People don’t give as much attention to those mental disorders as they should,” said Dice.

Upper Left: Brianna Dice was this years winner of the annual Voice competition. Dice was inspired by her mother to start singing and has been writing her own music since she was 10 years old.



why isn't time healing my wounds?

don't you dare tell me just "get over it" ...

AUDRIE

sometimes i wonder why i try...

my life is over.

and there are no pictures of me right?

& DAISY

night

do u have any idea what happened?



AUDRIE & DAISY

For many Northwestern Missourians, the story of Daisy Coleman from Maryville hits a little closer to home than most. She's been the topic of controversy for several years ever since the story of her rape and subsequent investigation was picked up by the media and brought to national attention. She received both support and condemnation from people across the nation, with many people shaming her across social media. The events of her story have been chronicled in a documentary, titled "Audrie and Daisy."

Missouri Western's Learning Community's decided to use her story as a way to bring awareness to students about how social media can shape how people's perceptions of race and gender issues. They not only presented the documentary, but also brought her to campus as part of a panel talking about the realities of sexual assault.

Cole McMillian, one of the Learning Community's coordinators, described where the idea to put on the panel came from.

"With this movie coming out, it kind of tied really well into the social media aspect,

as well as the gender aspect and how women deal with sexual assault cases and how those are treated online," McMillian said. "I had the idea of maybe seeing if we could get her to do a panel because her new organization was going around the country doing panels at universities. It was perfectly relevant to what we had going on."

Coleman's organization, SafeBAE, is a "student-focused, survivor-driven campaign whose mission is to raise awareness about sexual assault in middle and high schools and student's rights under Title IX," according to their mission statement.

"We like to go to high schools and teach kids about Title IX rights, bystander intervention and what consent is," Coleman said. "We created a series of educational films where we can educate people on their Title IX rights and you can take these back to your high schools and teach other people about it."

Dr. Christopher Bond, the director of Learning Communities, pointed out how important it was to be educated on Title IX laws.

"We are fortunate enough to have an

actual director of Title IX here [on campus]," Bond said. "It speaks for itself that almost the entire room raised their hand when Daisy asked, 'do you know what Title IX is?'"

Besides detailing her organization's goals and purposes, Coleman spoke about topics such as the importance that victims share their stories of survival and how finding a good counselor can help victims express their feelings without judgement.

"Once I found a good counselor it was really good for me to get out all of that bad energy and negativity," Coleman said. "I think it's really good to have a counselor; they're basically just kind of like a friend who is going to sit back and listen to all of your problems. Sometimes they give advice, sometimes they don't, but I think they are great for whatever you are going through."

Counselors were on hand to provide support for any audience members who might have felt uncomfortable. Law enforcement officers were also present in case anyone wanted to report a crime. Overall, nearly 200 people were in attendance of the documentary and panel.





Dr. Nathanael May

Art is known to be an idea of the expression or application of human creative skills and imagination, typically in visual forms producing works to be appreciated primarily for their beauty or emotional power. Dr. Nathanael May, an associate professor at the department of music, knew exactly how to execute this concept not only in Missouri Western, but also other places across the globe.

Dr. May is a festival producer, concert organizer, recording artist, consultant, educator and pianist. He has had a passion for music and art ever since he was nine years old. Starting off by playing the piano and other brass instruments, he ventured himself into the educational field with the aim to follow the footsteps of Jerry Bramblett, his music professor and his mentor from the University of Wisconsin-Whitewater.

"I've always known that I wanted to teach in a university setting," May said. "When I was in high school, I studied with a professor from a university [Bramblett]. I was enamored with everything that he did, and really how passionate he was about music and sharing that with younger people."

One of the things that Dr. May feels crucial in teaching music is to show how beautiful the cultures of different places can intertwine with each other, which produce magnificent works to be both celebrated and appreciated. Accompanying this appreciation, May founded soundSCAPE, an annual composition and performance exchange

festival where people from all over the world attend to meet up at one place and trade their multicultural ideas and knowledge as a process of collaboration within the field of arts and music.

"I had the whole idea when I was living in Cyprus, which was very isolated because there isn't much of the Western classical music tradition there," May said. "Revisiting my late professor [Bramblett], who brought several students across the state into our school for a piano camp, I felt the need to do the same. Although I recreated that opportunity on a different scale, which was going international, I just had so much love toward my vision seeing people from all over the world come together in a same place to share the same passion."

Most definitely, his visions came true. The 12 soundSCAPE festivals that have been held throughout the years have received participants from all over the world. People are able to attend several workshops and masterclasses, perform their respected music in front of crowd and witness famous musicians play their most appreciated pieces.

Besides representing himself as the founder and artistic director of this phenomenal music festival, Dr. May has also represented Missouri Western to perform and teach music in various countries such as Serbia, the Netherlands, Italy, Cyprus, Turkey, Kazakhstan, England, Ireland, Panama, Germany and Canada.

One of the great musicians that he is glad

to have worked with is Rebecca Penneys, his teacher at the Eastman School of Music, who used to study with the famous pianist, Arthur Rubinstein.

Throughout his experience as a musician himself, Dr. May has received awards of distinction, has been recognized for his contributions to university scholarship and service and was named the 2011 Outstanding Recent Alumnus of his alma mater, the University of Wisconsin-Whitewater.

Richard Yeager, an adjunct professor of clarinet, also appreciates Dr. May's contributions to the music department of Missouri Western.

"May does an excellent job at being flexible while teaching the students here," Yeager said. "Having his presence in the department in general is just a delight."

And that's not all; international student Kevin Yang, who majors in piano performance, claims Dr. May as one of the best mentors that he has had since he set foot at Missouri Western from Burma.

"Dr. May is wonderful both as a professor and a human being," Yang said. "Not only does he teach extremely well in class and has always believed in me, I also actually feel that he sincerely cares about his students as if we are his own children. He also spends a lot of time with us outside of class to discuss about our future career plans, and I'm just really grateful to be studying under him!"



Mystics

When the Western Mystics can't stop the feeling, they dance.

The five members on the dance team spend six hours a week preparing for a performance, not including how much time is spent dedicated to practicing on their own. One may say that dancing is not hard work, but to the Mystics it is what they pour their hearts into.

The dance team performs alongside the Western marching band during the football and basketball seasons. A new dance is learned every two weeks. Most dances that are performed have high energy, allowing the crowd to get pumped up and show their support.

Dancing is a great way to form bonds and friendships that can last forever. Spending hours with the same women can allow dancers to learn about one another and find the strengths on the team.

Amanda Estep, the first-year assistant coach for the Mystics, has some history with the dance team. She was on the team for four years, captain for three years and has stepped up as assistant coach.

Estep said that by coaching the team, she has watched the girls grow in their dance technique, their relationships and show support for the university.

"I believe dance can help the girls show school spirit, make new relationships, and be seen," Estep said. "What better way to feel a part of your university than getting to cheer on the teams from the sidelines."

Gabbi George, a first-year Mystic who has

been dancing for 17 years, said the dance team has a very close bond this season.

"We all know what we bring to the table and we try to help better each other every practice," George said. "We might be few in number, but I believe quality beats quantity any time."

Each performance is a reminder that dance does not just mean to move your body. Dance is portraying emotion and expressing oneself through movement. Dance is an art.

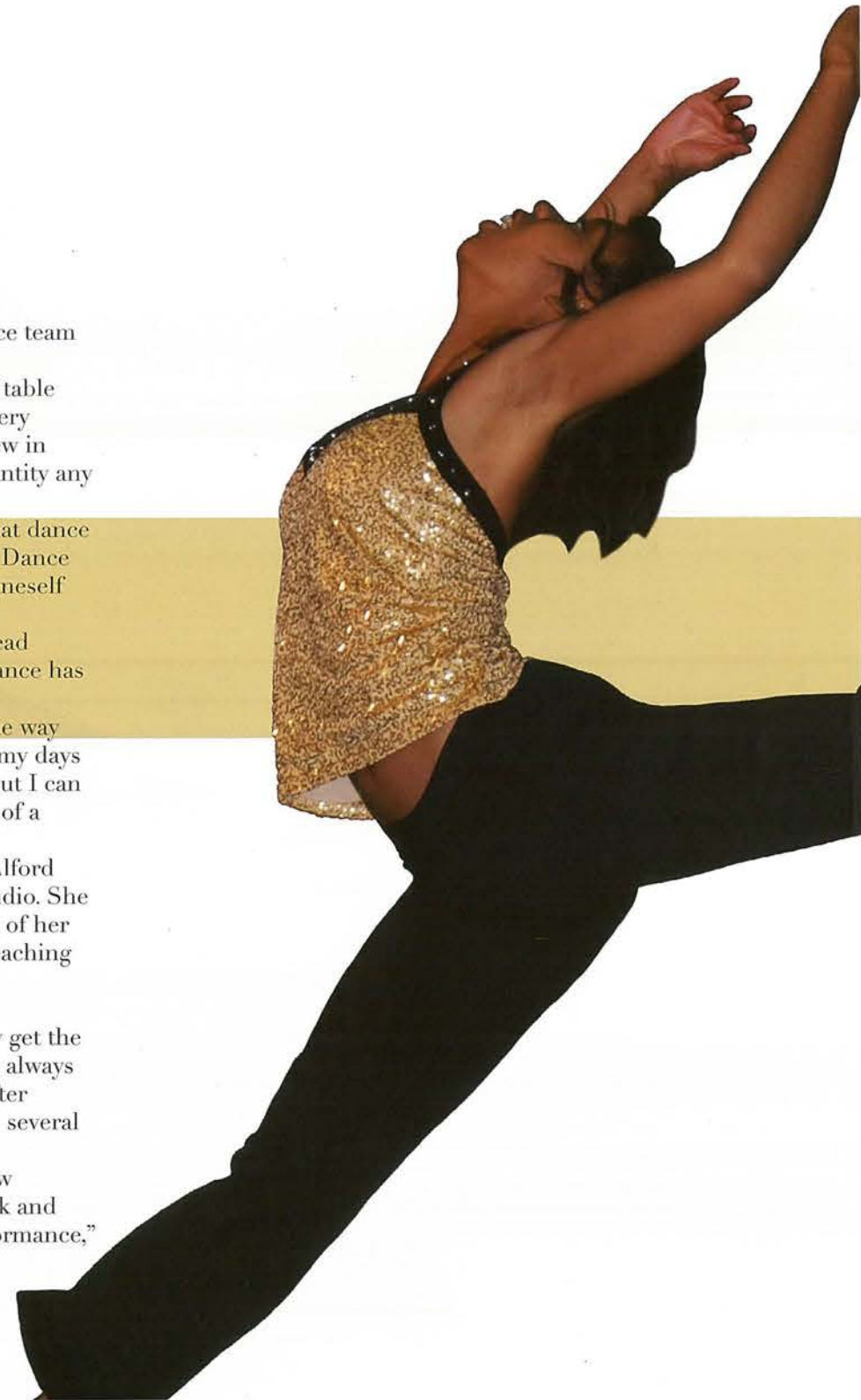
Jordan Alford, a captain and the head choreographer of the team, said that dance has helped her confidence.

"Dance to me is an outlet and a true way to express myself," Alford said. "I have my days when I may be feeling super stressed but I can always count on dancing to get me out of a funk."

In addition to being on the team, Alford also just established her own dance studio. She said the team has been very supportive of her dreams and hopes to have their help teaching aspiring dancers.

Spending hours preparing for a performance is well worth it when they get the reaction from the crowd. The students always cheer for the dance team before and after performances. Estep said the team gets several compliments every game.

"That is always nice to hear to know someone appreciates all your hard work and looks forward to seeing your next performance," Estep said.





The Mystics Dance Team are all smiles. The team grew a close-knit bond during their season.





Missouri Western's Speech and Debate Team has been an integral part of several students' lives over the past four years. Students from a variety of backgrounds and majors found common ground in the program directed by Jason Edgar.

"My dream job is coaching speech and debate on the university level," Edgar said, who was hired by Western as a full-time speech and debate director in 2015. "This first year and a half, I've been able to do that."

Edgar came to Western from a community college in Southwest Missouri and was the university's first full-time speech and debate director. He said debate is important to creating well-rounded students for several reasons.

"It's a search for the probable truth, meaning that we research and develop our arguments and try to provide clarity and clash to an interested audience," Edgar said.

The program allowed students to sharpen life skills they can carry into their professional life. Michael Smith, a senior philosophy major, was quite successful during his time in the speech and debate and said his experience in the program will be beneficial to him as he ventures into corporate law after graduation.

"There's never a presentation in my life I'm going to be nervous giving, or feel like I'm underprepared," Smith said. "Debate has given me the ability to think on my toes and always be critical of what's around me, or the information I've been given, and then relay that in a way that's digestible for every individual that exists in a room."

Sophomore Lily Grantham joined the debate team this past school year to hone

those skills and also to have the opportunity to learn more about current world events than she could in her other classes.

"Not only do you develop the ability to speak well in front of groups and things like that, but you have the opportunity to expose yourself to different issues globally and locally that you wouldn't otherwise," Grantham said. "You learn a lot more than I think is possible outside of debate, without a lot more effort."

Grantham, who is double majoring in philosophy and history, said that while enrolling in debate is not required for her specific majors, it was worth it for the experience.

This winter, state budget cuts forced the university to suspend the program after the 2016-2017 school year. It was no easy decision for Western's president, Dr. Robert Vartabedian, who was instrumental in the program's rebirth in 2013.

Debate was fundamental throughout Vartabedian's career. From his beginnings on his high school team, to student-teaching a speech and debate team in college, to assisting the Wichita State University debate and forensics program in graduate school, a university where he later became the speech and debate director, debate has been extremely important to Vartabedian since the late 1960s.

"I'm having to suspend something that was central to my career, both as a student and as a faculty member, so I didn't take it lightly," Vartabedian said.

Vartabedian got the ball rolling on the speech and debate program four years ago. After gauging student interest, he made a donation from his own personal funds as

"I'M HAVING TO SUSPEND SOMETHING THAT WAS CENTRAL TO MY CAREER, BOTH AS A STUDENT AND AS A FACULTY MEMBER, SO I DIDN'T TAKE IT LIGHTLY."
QUOTE \ PRESIDENT ROBERT VARTABEDIAN

part of a three-year commitment to start it up, hoping interest would continue to expand and the program would grow and be able to support itself.

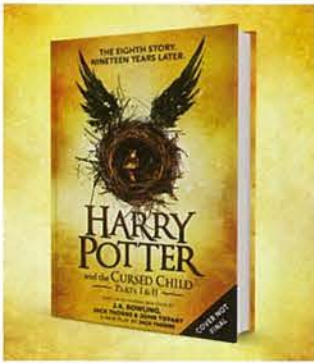
Unfortunately, Western's speech and debate program never got those big numbers Vartabedian was hoping for; it claimed just 11 students for the spring 2017 semester.

"In a fairly short period of time, say, five years, evidently, interests have shifted," Vartabedian said. "We can't just do it because Vartabedian believes in the program. We have to do it for reasons that make good financial sense. And at this point, it didn't make good financial sense, unfortunately."

Vartabedian said he is proud of what the program has accomplished, referencing the duo of Christopher Miles and Michael Smith as "one of the top teams around." However, he said the evolution of parliamentary debate, what the program was initially intended for, into fast-talking, angry argumentation with verbal shortcuts and foul language was one of the many factors in the university's decision to suspend the program.

"I think there are many opportunities," Vartabedian said. "This is one that's been put on hold."

July 2016



J.K. ROWLING RELEASES ANOTHER BOOK TO ADD TO THE HARRY POTTER SERIES. JULY 2016.



JULY 4TH- JUNO, AN AMERICAN SPACECRAFT REACHED JUPITER AND BEGAN ORBIT. JUNO CONTINUES TO SEND BACK PICTURES AND DATA.



ARNOLD PALMER DIED IN SEPTEMBER 2016.



DONALD TRUMP WINS THE 2016 ELECTION.



GENE WILDER DIED IN AUGUST 2016.



THE UNITED STATES AND CUBA OPEN AIR TRAVEL BETWEEN THE COUNTRIES AFTER 54 YEARS. PRESIDENT OBAMA PROMISES TO NORMALIZE RELATIONS.



LOUISIANA IS HIT BY MAJOR FLOODING IN 2016 AFTER COUNTLESS STORMS MOVE THROUGH THE DEEP SOUTH.



CHICAGO CUBS WIN THE WORLD SERIES AFTER 108 YEARS OF WAITING.



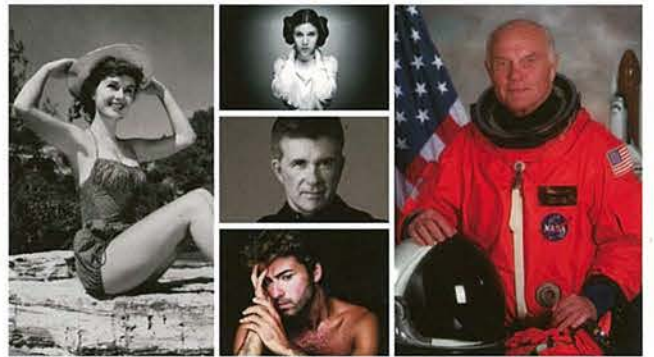
FIDEL CASTRO, LONG TIME COMMUNIST DICTATOR OF CUBA, DIES IN NOVEMBER 2016.



OHIO STATE UNIVERSITY WAS ATTACKED BY THE DRIVER OF A VEHICLE, WHO DROVE THROUGH A CROWD OF PEOPLE, THEN USED A KNIFE TO INJURE MORE AFTER WRECKING HIS CAR.



PROTESTERS SUCESSFULLY STOP THE NORTH DAKOTA ACESS PIPELINE FORM CROSSING SAORED NATIVE AMERICAN LAND.



ALAN THICKE, GEORGE MICHAEL, JOHN GLENN, CARIE FISHER, AND DEBBIE REYNOLDS ALL DIED IN DECEMBER 2016.



SAMSUNG'S NEWEST GALAXY DEVICE, THE NOTE 7, WAS RECALLED FOR DEFECTIVE BATTERIES AND CHARGING SYSTEMS THAT CAUSED THEM TO OATCH FIRE.



AS OF DECEMBER 2016 CALIFORNIA IS NOW POWERING OVER 6 MILLION HOMES WITH SOLAR POWER, SETTING THE WORLD WIDE RECORD.

Dec.
2016



SHORTLY AFTER THE INNAGURATION OF DONALD TRUMP OVER 450,000 WOMEN MARCHED ON WASHINGTON DC IN SUPPORT OF GENDER EQUALITY.



MARY TYLER MOORE DIED JANUARY 25 2017.



IN FEBRUARY THE 59TH GRAMMY AWARDS WERE HELD. ADELLE TOOK HOME 5 GRAMMY'S INCLUDING ALBUM OF THE YEAR, WHICH, SHE GAVE BEYONCE ALL THE CREDIT.

Jan. 2017



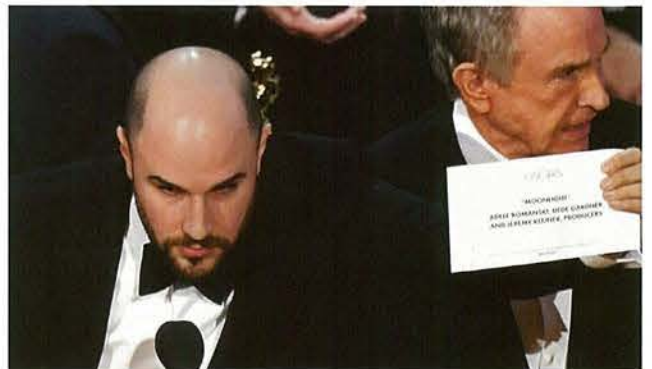
DONALD J. TRUMP WAS INNAGURATED AS THE 45TH PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA.



THE NEW ENGLAND PATRIOTS WON THE 2017 NFL SUPER BOWL. THIS IS THE 5TH SUPERBOWL CHAMPIONSHIP FOR THE TEAM.



FEBRUARY 26TH THE 89TH ACADEMY AWARDS HAD AN EXTRAVAGANT SHOWING. THIS, ALONG WITH A LIVE MISTAKE BY WARREN BEATTY, READING THE WRONG WINNER FOR BEST PICTURE. 'MOONLIGHT' WAS THE ACTUAL WINNER.

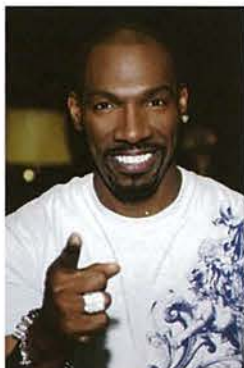




BILL PAXTON DIED DURING A VALVE REPLACEMENT SURGERY IN FEBRUARY 2017. HE WAS ONLY 61 YEARS OLD, AND DIED OF COMPLICATIONS DURING SURGERY.



THE NORTH CAROLINA TAR HEELS WON THE 2017 NCAA BASKETBALL CHAMPIONSHIP DURING MARCH MADNESS.



AOTORS: DON RICKLES, CHARLIE MURPHY AND ERIN MORAN DIED IN APRIL OF 2017.



NASA DISCOVERS 7 NEW "EARTHLIKE" PLANETS IN A NEARBY STAR SYSTEM. FURTHER RESEARCH MAY OR MAY NOT REVEAL ALIEN LIFE.



SINGER SONGWRITER CHUCK BERRY AND CHASE MANHATTAN BANK CEO DAVID ROCKAFELLER DIED IN MAROH 2017.



WINTER STORM STELLA HIT THE EAST COAST OF THE US. DROPPING OVER 2 FEET OF SNOW IN LESS THAN 24 HOURS. THE STORM SHUT DOWN METROPOLITAIN AREAS IN NEW YORK AND NEW JERSEY.



IN APRIL AROHEOLOGISTS IN EGYPT DISCOVERED A NEW ANCIENT PYRAMID PRE-DATING THE PYRAMID OF GIZA. IT HAS BEEN 20 YEARS SINCE THE LAST PYRAMID DISCOVERY.

June 2017





SPORTS

honors

1st Team MIAA
Travis Anderson
Josh Caldwell

2nd Team MIAA
Max Oeser
James Huskey
Donte Watkins

Student Athlete of the Year
Travis Anderson

Third Team MIAA
Dijuan Ussery

Honorable Mention
Patrick Bolton
Blake Vandenberg
Hayden Eatinger

Daylon Harper
Cody Lindsey
Darrian Bass
Tyrell Robinson

MIAA Scholar Athletes
Max Oeser

MIAA Honor Roll
Travis Anderson
Tyler Base
Thomas Bump
Josh Caldwell
Hayden Eatinger
Sean Galey
Derek Gray
Dominic Jamerson
DeEll Midgyett
Quintin Mueller
Jonathan Owens
Tanner Pettet
Shawn Rouse
Kendall Short
Matthew Vincent
Emmett Wester
Tyler Wrice



Travis Anderson blocks during Western's annual Pink Out game. Anderson was named the Student Athlete of the Year.



The Griffon football team did not end the 2016 season in their newly renovated home the way they had hoped, but according to Athletic Director Kurt McGuffin that isn't reason to be fearful of the future.

"Our young team was probably a factor," McGuffin said. "It was a season that was probably not up to our standards, but I have a feeling that we're going to get back there pretty soon."

One of those young players who shares McGuffin's optimism and is slated to play several more seasons is redshirt sophomore running back

149-83

Jerry Partridge finished his 20th and final season as head coach for the Griffons. Partridge was the 6th coach in program history. His final overall record with the Griffons is 149-83. Partridge recorded two MIAA championships and two MIAA Coach of the Year awards. He finished his career at Missouri Western with just four losing seasons.

Joshua Caldwell, who led the MIAA with 1,408 rushing yards on the season and an average of 128 yards per game.

"We improved a lot on offense," Caldwell said. "We scored more points, got more yards and had less turnovers than the year before. Our main focus is winning all three phases of the game."

McGuffin noted that one particularly formidable force on the field the Griffons will be losing next season is Travis Anderson, a redshirt senior offensive lineman who was named to the All-MIAA conference team.

"We only had nine seniors, but Travis Anderson was first team MIAA offensive lineman and when you get a first teamer, it's real important for them," McGuffin said. "I think he showed he was a senior leader on that offensive line."

Anderson said he was glad to have made some improvements in his performance this season and to have made some lasting memories with his "brothers" but he is also ready for the future.

"Next season, I will be watching from the stands for the first time in a long time," Anderson said. I am excited to see the finished product that the team puts out after months of work. Although the wins did not show it, the team came together and fought as one. 100 guys from different backgrounds all coming together for one common goal."

Caldwell underscored Anderson's sentiments, saying no matter the obstacles being a Griffon means you "#BallTilYouFall."

Anderson said that while the 4-7 2016 season was not up to Griffon standards, Griffons are also proud of their ability to meet adversity head on.

"Being a Griffon doesn't mean you are the most talented or gifted athlete, but it does mean you will out work the player across from you on the line of scrimmage and no matter who they are you will not back down."

Football



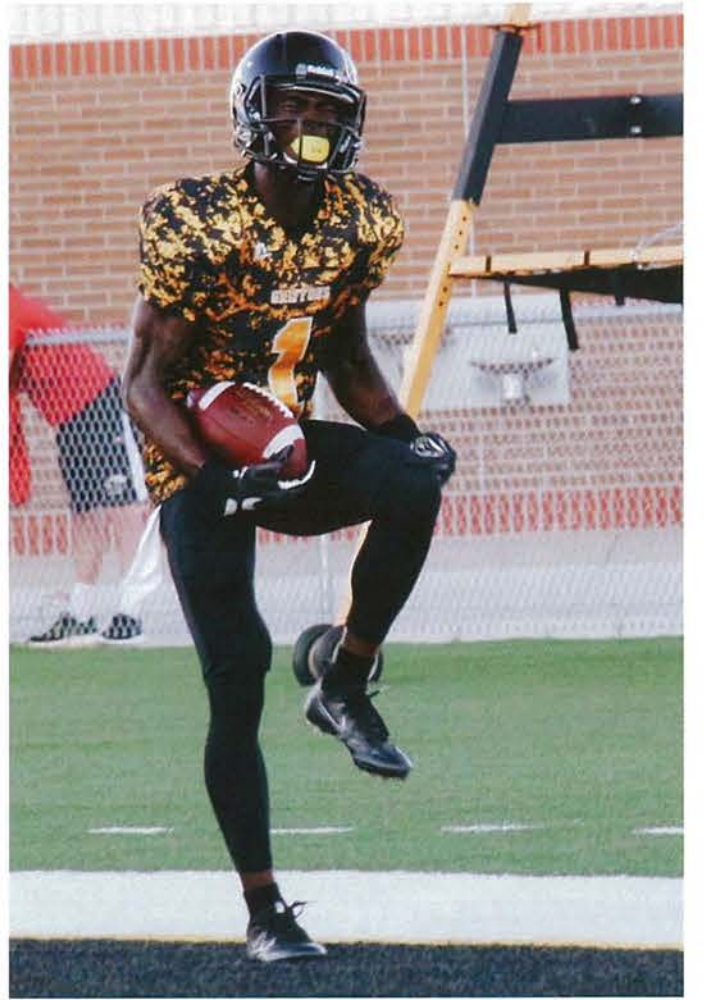


PHOTO \ \ JOHN ELLIS

Matt Williamson

Western has announced that Matt Williamson will take over the responsibility of head football coach for next year's football season.

Williamson is the sixth head coach in Western history. He is quite familiar with Griffon football, as he began as a graduate assistant in 1997, and was a defensive line coach in 2000 before becoming defensive coordinator in 2005.

Before returning back to Western as head football coach, Williamson spent 10 seasons at the Division I level and was defensive coordinator at various universities.

Williamson began taking steps for team improvement by putting them in an uncomfortable place.

"Obviously losing is uncomfortable, and we wanted to see who dealt with that well and who did not deal with that well," Williamson said.

"From that point on they have to grow and we have to teach them how to adjust to that."

Coach Williamson put the team through a tough boot camp to start out with. He wanted to find out who the top leaders are mentally and whom he can count on off and on the field.

He is also continuing to improve styles of play and the recruiting aspect. He always tries to recruit better than the past.

Growing up, Williamson didn't plan on being a coach. His family members are teachers, and he was double majoring in exercise science and physical education.

However, when he got the opportunity to get his master's degree paid for, he had to coach football. During his first day of coaching, he knew that is what he wanted to do for the rest of his life.

Director of Athletics, Kurt McGuffin, is very happy that Williamson has returned home.

"That was probably what brought him to the forefront, his connection to us and his ties to our alumni base is a real bonus," McGuffin said.

The team is also looking forward to what changes may come with the new head coach.

Darrian Bass, junior linebacker, said Williamson has connected greatly with the team.

"Our main focus as a team is to buy into the program and trust the process we believe to be successful in many ways," Bass said. "Ways such as winning games which turns into championships or being on time for class which turns into good grades. Coach Williamson's energy and dedication has allowed us to trust him."

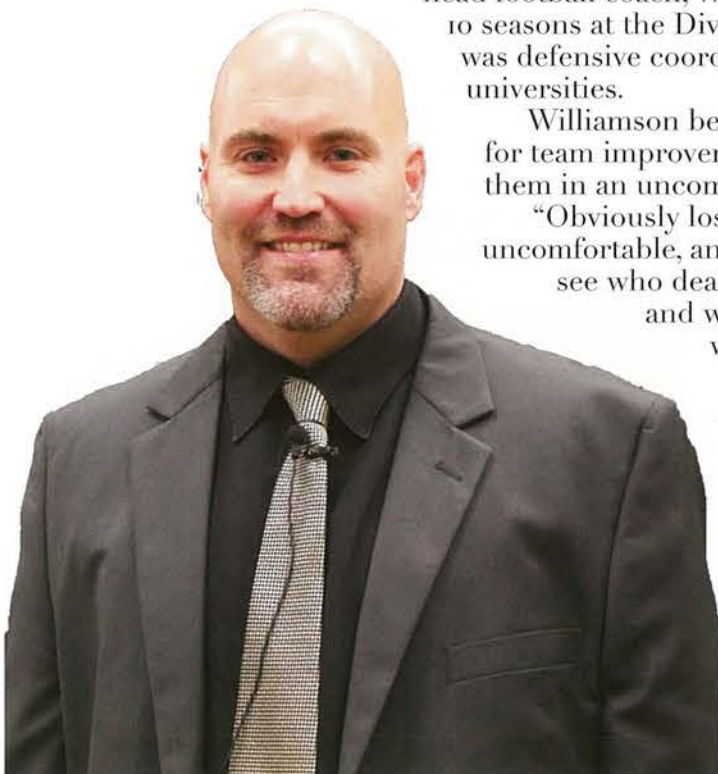
Williamson added that the comradery between the coaching staff and the players is a huge aspect in his coaching.

"They trust us, and they feel comfortable with us," Williamson said. "They know we are not going to be easy on them, but they know that we've got their back always too."

The Griffons ended last season with a 4-7 record; however, that isn't discouraging to the coach or the team.

The team has a grit and a fight that surprised Williamson. They are hungry for discipline and structure as well as a win. There are expectations that the coaching staff tries to strive for. If the team lives by those expectations, there will be a lot of success.

"I know if they buy into what this coaching staff is doing, and they jump into it whole-heartedly, we are going to win a lot of games," Williamson said.



The New Spratt Stadium

The 2016-2017 academic year brought a big change to athletics at Missouri Western – one that can be seen from up to 10 miles away. Spratt Stadium, Western’s football field that was in desperate need of some TLC, got a huge face lift over the spring and summer of 2016, including a massive new video scoreboard.

Director of Athletics Kurt McGuffin said the new stadium is a step in the right direction for Missouri Western athletics.

“For where we came from, what we had before, whether it was a year ago or 20 years ago, Missouri Western’s grown up quite a bit,” McGuffin said.

McGuffin said that athletics is one of the few academic departments that has to generate its own revenue and doesn’t get

much help from state funding, and that need to produce revenue was one of the factors that went into building a new football stadium. According to McGuffin, the stadium and video board were paid for through substantial private and corporate donations as well as bonds that will be paid back over time, and no student money went into the project.

McGuffin said one of his favorite aspects of the makeover is that the field itself is now 32 feet closer to the main grandstand, and that newfound proximity to the fans makes the atmosphere electric.

“You go into arenas or stadiums, and what do you really notice? You notice the sound – whether it’s fan-generated, or sound-system generated,” McGuffin said. “It’s just an

experience that, I think, touches everybody that comes to an event here.”

One of the largest parts (literally) of the new stadium is the custom-built 78-foot tall, 138-foot wide high-definition video scoreboard, the second largest in Division II athletics.

Powered by a production crew about a dozen strong, including several Missouri Western students and as many as five camera operators, the video board offers fans an experience not unlike an NFL television broadcast.

Director of Athletic Communications Ryan Menley calls the shots from the control booth. He said the goal is to have the fans watching the scoreboard more than the game itself.

“We treat it like a television broadcast,” Menley said. “You’re getting fans that are in the stadium a different look, and kind of a unique look. We’re taking them right in the middle of the action, on the field, in the huddle, in the middle of it.”

Menley said he has received texts from people that were as far away as Buffalo Wild Wings in northern St. Joseph that could see the glow of the video board lighting up the night sky.

“When it’s on, you can see it,” said Menley with a smile.

McGuffin said he hopes the video board paired with a beautiful football stadium will ignite even more interest in the various athletics programs at Missouri Western. He and Menley both say they have heard a lot of positive feedback from those in the community, even from the Kansas City Chiefs during their summer training camp.

“They say it’s top notch,” McGuffin said. “And it is. For our level, it’s about as good as you can get in this league. . . in the end, I think it’s about everything we wanted.”





The Spratt Stadium building guards the entrance to the football fields. As part of the renovations, the stadium facilities were updated. The new scoreboard is being assembled. The scoreboard became the largest scoreboard in the MIAA. It is a 2,500 sq-ft display and is the largest gift an individual has given in the history of Griffon Athletics.



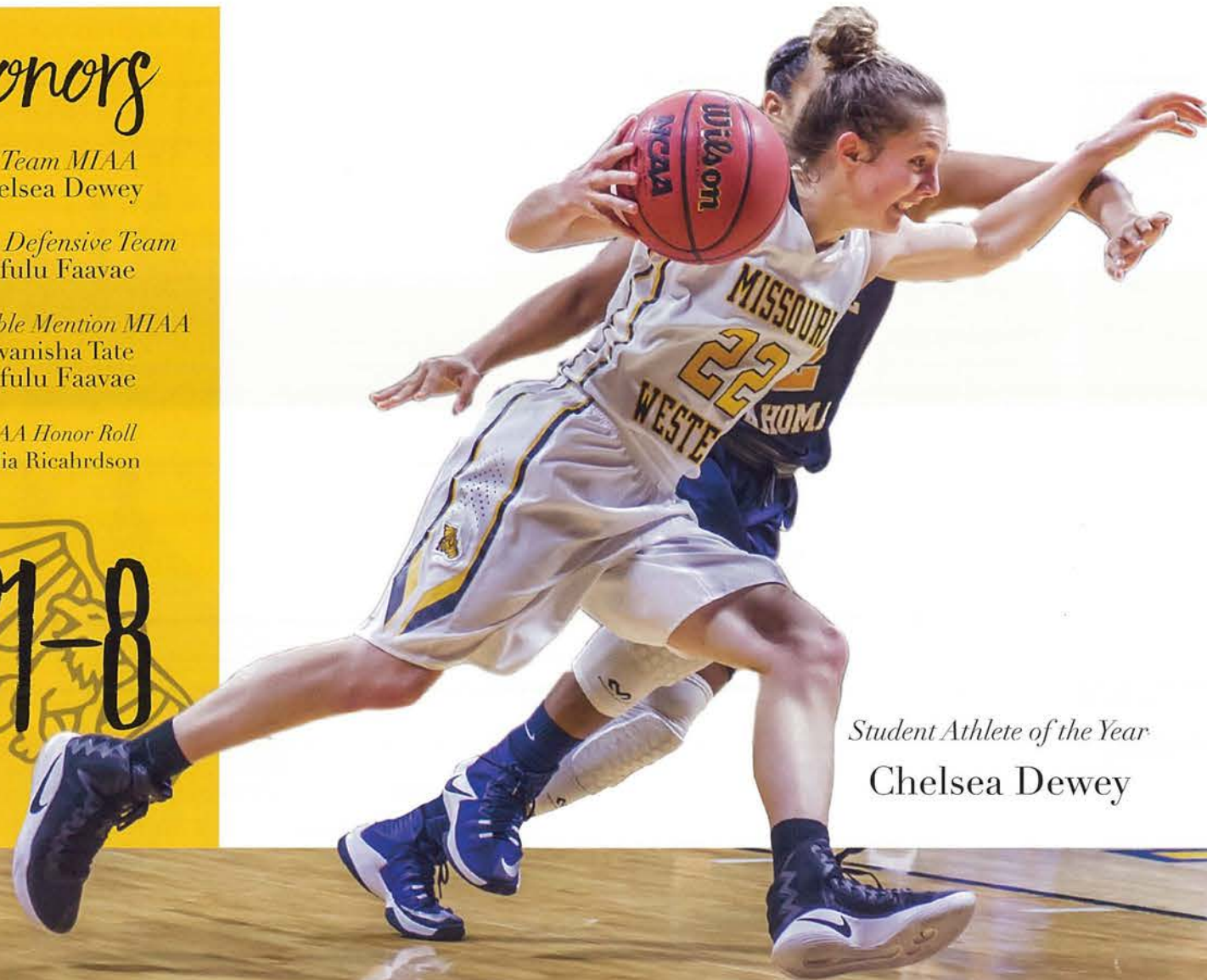
honors

1st Team MIAA
Chelsea Dewey

MIAA Defensive Team
Sefulu Faavae

Honorable Mention MIAA
Dwanisha Tate
Sefulu Faavae

MIAA Honor Roll
Melia Ricahrdson



Student Athlete of the Year
Chelsea Dewey



Women's Basketball

The Missouri Western women's basketball team finished the season with a 21-7 record for their third winning season in a row and added an MIAA conference game to their resume.

Besides getting a bye in the first game of the MIAA tournament, some of the season's highlights included beating nationally-ranked Emporia State University at home and beating the University of Central Oklahoma on the road when that team was undefeated 18-0. Of course, sweeping Western's rivals to the north was also a highlight for the team.

Head Coach Rob Edmisson said he believes the past two seasons are a sign the women's basketball program has seen a turnaround and considers this season a successful one.

"Playing in the toughest conference in the country, every game is pretty huge," Edmisson said, noting that only two games separated the first and fourth place teams in

the conference. "When you go through and look at conference games, the fact that we were very successful on the road – I think we were 11-3 on the road this year – that's something that was a highlight: our ability to go win road games, because that's tough to do in this league."

Senior point guard Chelsea Dewey agrees that every game had its highlights. Dewey was the team's top scorer, racking up 373 points during the regular season. She said the team's winning record says a lot about their coach and the team's chemistry.

"You can't be successful without chemistry," Dewey said. "Having players that are willing to buy in is also another key factor. He [Edmisson] definitely found some players like that."

Associate Director of Athletics for External Relations Brett Esely said the team had some big shoes to fill after losing four starters that were instrumental in an

incredibly successful 2015-2016 season. He says the increased interest of new recruits can be attributed to the coaches and what the team has built over these past several seasons.

"I think they went from being the hunter to being the hunted, when you have the season that we did," Esely said. "When you have a year like we had in 2015, where you win 27 games, all of a sudden the mentality of your team changes. . . now, every time we line up, we think we can win!"

Esely and Edmisson agree that recruitment will play a key role in the ongoing success of the women's basketball program and are optimistic that the team will see the same results, even with some fresh faces.

"Now it's on the next group to maintain that level," Esely said. "And it's never easy. But I think it'll be easier, just because they've built a program where people want to come play here again, which is a good thing."



Basketball

Student Athlete of the Year
Cole Clearman

Injuries and a tough schedule plagued the Griffon men's basketball team this past season.

The Griffons went 7-21, marking their seventh losing season in a row. But head coach Brett Weiberg said he is proud of his students and what the team was able to accomplish in such a difficult season.

"We do have some good players, good competitors, good students, good people... but it was a challenging year," Weiberg said.

Four players had surgeries between the first day of preseason and the first regular season game, which is one aspect that Weiberg attributed to the team's losing record.

One of those students was senior point guard Aaron Emmanuel, who played his final season on the Griffon men's basketball team this past season. Emmanuel had his third of three knee surgeries near the beginning of the season, but was able to come back and play most of the season.

"It kind of set me back personally in my goals and what I personally had set out for the season, for my senior year," Emmanuel said. "But that's the cards I was dealt, so I just made the best out of it."

While it was a tough season for the Griffon men, some of the highlights included beating two of the top four teams in Division II (Nebraska-Kearney and Missouri Southern), and beating

a Division I school (Southern Illinois University – Edwardsville). Associate Director of Athletics for External Relations Brett Esely said any win on the road is rewarding, but beating a Division I team is an even bigger highlight.

"IT'S ABOUT PUTTING IN THE WORK AND LEARNING FROM YOUR MISTAKES THE FOLLOWING YEAR."
QUOTE \\\ AARON EMMANUEL

"Sometimes when you go into games and you have very little expectations, sometimes those are the games where you reap the biggest reward," Esely said. "If you can beat those teams, at our level, in our league, I think you can be competitive on any night."

Weiberg, Emmanuel and Esely all agree that recruitment of new players will play an important part in the team's success going forward. Emmanuel said the key to success will lie in setting short-term goals and taking things one game at a time.

"It's about putting in the work and learning from your mistakes the following year," Emmanuel said. "What you did wrong and what you did right, how you can build on those things you did right, how you can subtract those things you did wrong and make it into a right."

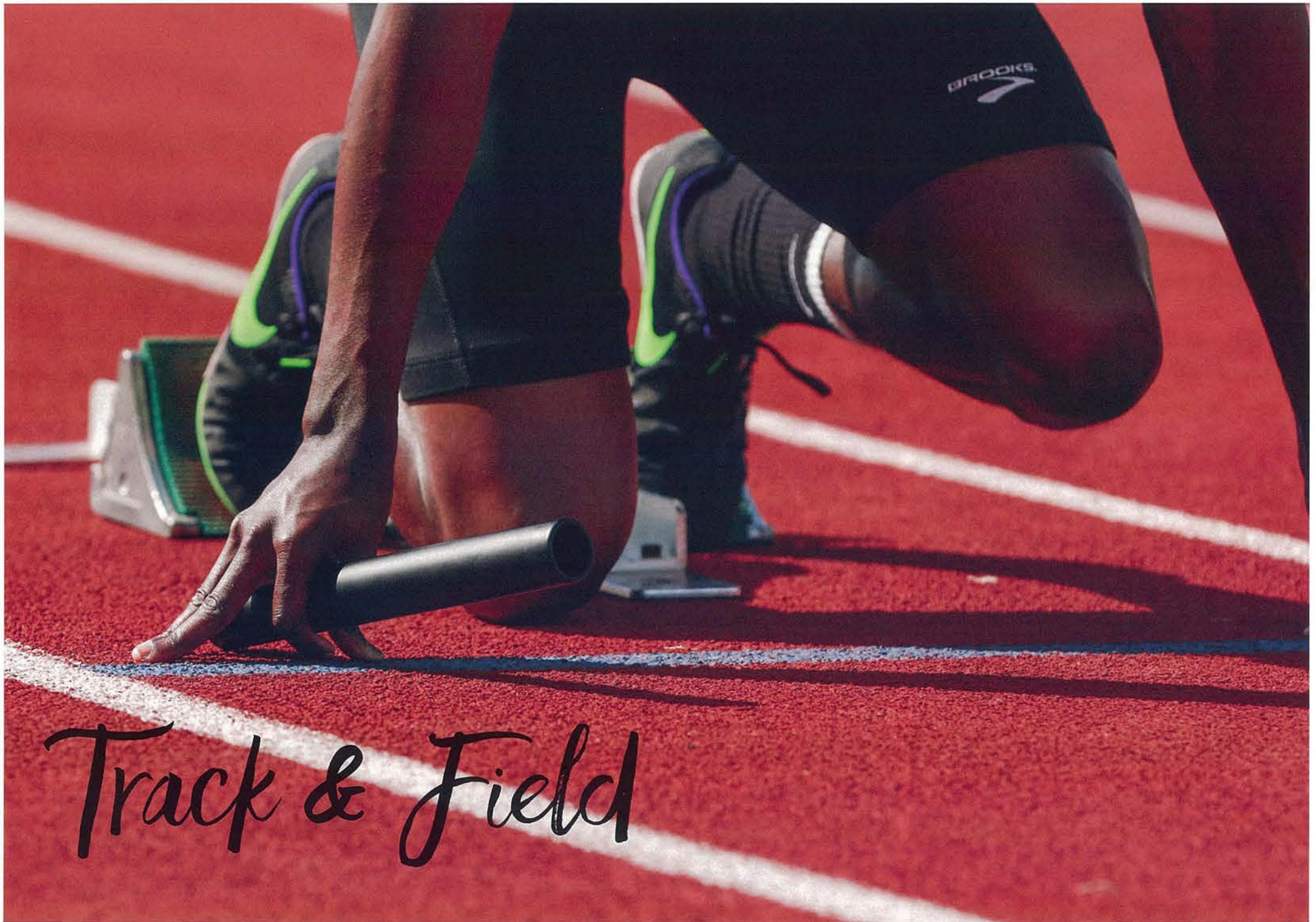


honors

MIAA Honor Roll
Seth Bonifas, Cole
Clearman & Wes Mitter

Honorable Mention MIAA
Cole Clearman





With long strides and high jumps, the Griffons have officially added Cross Country and Track and Field teams to the athletic roster at Missouri Western.

Up until 2016, Western was one of only two schools in the NAA conference that didn't have track and field, which made it an easy decision for Athletic Director Kurt McGuffin to add the program.

The Griffons Track and Field program will not only provide another athletic opportunity for students but will increase enrollment. Since the recruitment process started back in September of 2016, around 85 students have been recruited using only 18 scholarships. The scholarship amounts are \$45,000 for the womens and men's team, which fits in the range of other Western sports, other than football.

McGuffin has hired on Coach Marc Bierbaum and Assistant Coach Cody Ingold to head the Griffons Cross Country and Track and Field athletes. Bierbaum and Ingold, long time friends and fellow track and field athletes, are thrilled to be working on this program together.

Ingold describes the process of leading this new team and putting all the hard work in as a dream. Bierbaum gushingly agreed, adding that there are no words that can fully describe the feeling you get from building a program.

"We are very excited," Bierbaum said. "It's significant to be first; there are not a lot of words for that. Overall, I would say

that we are bordering or have surpassed my expectation [of recruitment] thus far."

Bierbaum and Ingold never skip a beat and spend countless hours traveling, making phone calls and giving tours all to prospective athletes. In addition to recruiting at a local level, they have both traveled to Nebraska, Iowa and even Texas to find their ideal athletes.

"IT'S SIGNIFICANT TO BE FIRST;
THERE ARE NOT A LOT OF WORDS
FOR THAT."

QUOTE \\\ MARC BIERBAUM

Bierbaum says they are looking for serious and seasoned athletes that have the potential to hold their own and compete. Track and field is looking for students who will start off competitively, placing Western on the charts in the conference then working up to going to nationals.

"The NCAA conference is hard," Bierbaum said. "It's a challenging conference, you need to be prepared."

"I'm not in this business to try to embarrass anybody, which is something I talk about with these kids," Bierbaum adds. "I don't want to put someone in a situation where they don't succeed. We are very clear about what they'll be up against and what the road in front of them is. Some kids we tell them this and they opt out of the team."

Bierbaum and Ingold are also keeping in mind the future of the program as they recruit, realizing that this year mostly freshman will make up the team. In a few years, as those students graduate, there will be a gap in the program. The coaches have stated they will work hard to even out the team so there will be an equal functioning team where all classes are represented.

Although Western does not have a track to practice on local high school, St. Joseph Christian has offered their facility in the mean time. The cross-country team will set up to practice on the north side of campus.

Moving forward the next few years McGuffin does not think budget cuts will effect the new program and will focus on fundraising efforts to assist with the build of a new track facility.

"In a perfect world, I would like to have a field on campus in the next 3 years," McGuffin said. "It just takes that one donor to take us up over the hump to get started."

Coach Bierbaum also has high goals for the Cross Country and Track and Field program.

"If we can in the next 5 years make a name for ourselves and find that niche for us in that conference will reach my expectations," Bierbaum said. "If we are sending some kids to nationals, fighting in the top half every year and we put ourselves in the position to try to win the conference title then we are doing what we need to do."





Women's Golf

It was another year of dominance for the women's golf team, which carried over into the program's rankings in the National Collegiate Athletic Association (NCAA) championships.

Shi Qing Ong was the team's top player, being named MIAA Women's Golfer of the Week four times in a row. In the NCAA Central Region Preview that was held at the Rivercut Golf Course in Springfield, Missouri, Ong led Missouri Western with a 154 and finished tied for eighth place.

That victory led the Griffons to climb up to the 63rd place out of 170 division two schools across the nation's relative ranking. Ong, who is also an international student from Malaysia, says that her first two years playing with the Griffons has been her best debut in her golfing career yet.

"Since coming here, I've managed to play my best, and be recognized in all of the seasons that I joined representing the school," Ong said. "I've played my personal best for the record, won two tournaments in a row and also tied in one tournament. I couldn't be anymore happy than where I am now."

Other players who contributed their skills to this past season's triumph were freshman Chong Yong and Megan Fogelson, sophomore Jenna Kosmatka, junior Tiffanie Yabut and

senior Madison Romjue.

The team's head coach, Greg Dillon, is extremely proud with how well the students have done.

"They moved from being a team that nobody else expected them to be," Dillon said. "Where now, the program has actually changed because of the girls; they have proved to be reckoned with. We've achieved to close that gap between other schools, that are extremely good teams, and us."

The Griffons' top showing came at the UNK Invite at Awarii Dunes, as they posted a team total of 610 during the two-day tournament. The scores that the players have brought home made them finish as runner-ups. Chong Yong finished in fourth place with a 5-over-par 149, her best finish as a Griffon; Tiffanie Yabut scored a 157 as she tied for 24th; Jenna Kosmatka carded a 162; and Madison Romjue knocked in a 164. One of the team's strengths that coach Dillon proudly acknowledges is the players' exhilaration to keep on going.

"As they learn how to compete, they learn how to win," Dillon said. "Especially when an individual scores high for the team, everybody else just realizes that winning breeds winning. It's a cumulative effort that brings from the previous seasons to the next."

Freshman Chong Yong, who had only

played in four tournaments so far, believes that her progress as a student athlete has boosted her spirits to win as much medals that she can possibly put her hands on.

"Even though I'm still very new here, I could totally feel myself getting better and better each time I play," Yong said. "The help and support from my coach and other teammates is the greatest; they keep me going to play my best without having the slightest thoughts to slow down."

Though, endless support is not the only factor that enhances the Griffons' achievements. The golfing facilities that are available for Missouri Western's players happen to be a quality that sets the team's standards higher than any other institutions' as well.

"We've got great indoor facilities at the St. Joseph Country Club, so our players are still able to train intensively during times of bad weather," Dillon, said. "Not only that it helps the team members upsurge their skill levels, but this fact also contributes to strategies in recruiting new members as well."

The women's golf team has used this season to prove that it is a strong program, being able to represent Missouri Western in the eyes of the nation and also to set the tone for future seasons.



honors

MIAA Scholar-Athlete
Shi Qing-Ong

MIAA Honor Roll
Jenna Kostmatka, Madison Romjue
& Tiffanie Yabut

Student Athlete of the Year
Shi Qing Ong





Student Athlete of the Year
Patrick McCarthy

While facing the 2016-17 season with a small, young team this year, the Western men's golf team held their own. Not only did the overall team have near top-ten finishes in most tournaments, but several individuals had high finishes, and two golfers were named to the MIAA all-conference team.

"We have a really young team but that won't stop us from competing," said freshman Patrick McCarthy. "If we take the necessary steps and apply what we do in practices to what we do on the real course, then the results will speak for themselves."

McCarthy consistently performed "on par" this season, snagging three top-ten individual tournament finishes. He was named to the MIAA all-conference team, and was chosen as the MIAA's Freshman of the Year. Kevin Kim was also named all-conference this season.

The breakout player to watch for next season unanimously agreed upon by his

teammates is freshman Jacob Majeske.

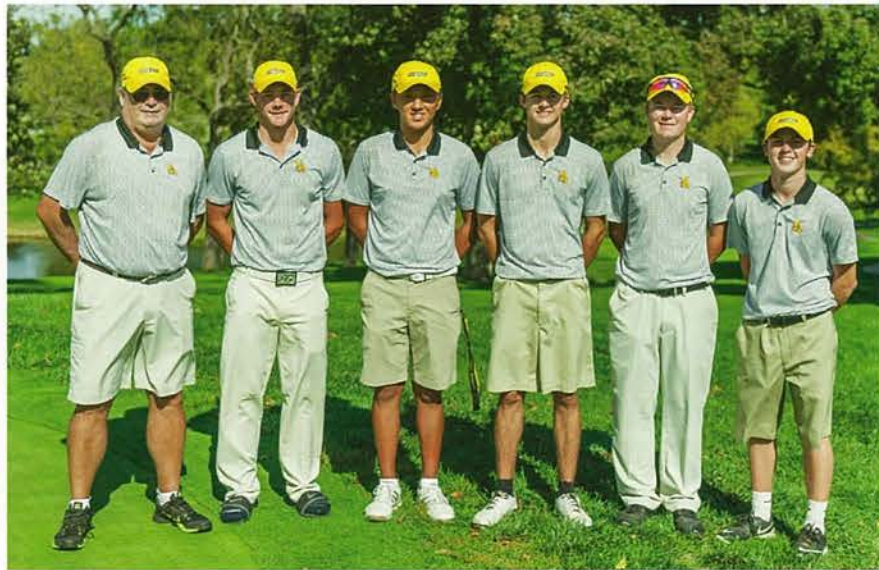
"He practices a ton and if he can stay consistent with his ball striking ability, he will be able to put up good numbers," said freshman Luke Horseman.

As their season progressed, the Griffon's grew stronger and more competitive. Head Coach Greg Dillon was excited to see the team take on a new edge as they started to find their formula for success.

"That's the best you can have because it just promotes competition. It just pushes everybody to bring their best every day. They'll soon understand they can compete with anyone and that any team can be beaten on any given day," said Dillon.

Moving forward to 2017-18, the team will be led by lone senior Jakob Rudosky and an ever-increasing group of talent.

"These guys have transitioned into the college game very well so far when I coached them in the fall so I expect nothing else but improvement," said Dillon.



honors

*All-MIAA
Patrick
McCarthy
Kevin Kim*

*MIAA Defesnsive
Team
Sefulu Faavae*

*2017 MIAA
Men's Golf
Freshman
of the Year
Patrick
McCarthy*



Softball



For Western's softball team, high quality and hard work are the base standards. The Griffons' official season ran mid-January through May, but they were active on average six days a week. Their scheduled season consists of tournaments, conference play and post-season play-offs.

In order to prepare for the spring season, the team spent many hours each week practicing and weightlifting both during and off-season.

"Our off-season workouts involve lifting and hitting throughout the summer and practices and scrimmages in the fall. We also train in the weight room and have individual softball workouts in the fall. We continue that lifting/conditioning regime into winter break

as well as softball workouts," said Morgan Rathman, senior outfielder.

The rigorous workout regime payed off for junior pitcher Barbara Billingsley, who received "Best MIAA Pitcher of the Week" award during her season at Western.

"I always know my team is behind me. Things are starting to come to together and I'm excited for what the rest of the season (post-season play) has in store for us," said Billingsley.

While the hardwork the girls put in this year was not in vain, head coach Jennifer Trotter, kept pushing her girls to the next level through her high expectations.

"Our season has had ups that have met my expectations and downs that have fallen

short of my expectations. My hope going forward is that our outcome in our post season tournaments will exceed expectations and finish our season on its highest note," Trotter said.

Six starters graduated this spring, making it even more important that underclassmen continue the standards set in place.

Incoming freshman Violet Holcomb will be new to the team this year, but has already been exposed to the team's expectations. She practiced with the girls and was used as a utility player for the team for this past spring.

"I'm most excited to travel with the team and see what the atmosphere is like at the different fields," said Holcomb.



honors

1st Team MIAA
Morgan Rathman
Katie Klosterman

2nd Team MIAA
Shelbie Atwell
Sydney Washington

Honorable Mention
MIAA
Bekah Mueller
Shelby Uhl



Co-Defensive Player of the Year
Katie Klosterman

Student Athlete of the Year
Morgan Rathman



Soccer



Western's 2016-2017 soccer season was one for the record books. The women's soccer team ended with an overall record of 11-7-1 and a conference record of 6-5-0. The program evolved and changed this season to keep the program heading in the right direction. The team had its third straight MIAA tournament appearance and hit a new program record with 11 wins in a season.

Chad Edwards, the head coach, said that he is happy with the success of the season.

"We never really set a goal to break the program record for wins," Edwards said. "It's been more of let's win at home and have the least amount of losses ever."

Edwards added that if the team takes care of those things, the records are going to take care of themselves.

Cassidy Menke is the first-ever MIAA 1st team selection

and set the single season record with 9 goals in a regular season. She said it was individual goal of hers and a tremendous honor.

"I couldn't have achieved this without the hard work and support of my teammates," Menke said. "It gave me extra confidence going forward that my team and my hard work was being noticed and making a difference."

The team worked hard every practice and pushed themselves every day. Every game they dug deep, didn't give up, and as a team tried to win every game. Even if they had a bad performance, they put it behind and came out stronger the next game.

Many players were recognized for being MIAA Scholar Athletes and honor roll athletes. Edwards said he is more proud of the number of players who reach graduation as well as their soccer careers.

The team has a positive outlook for next season filled with high hopes and expectations.

"The goal always is to get better every day, every game and every season," Menke said.



Student Athlete of the Year
Bailey Dervin

honors

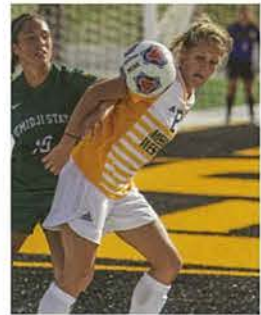
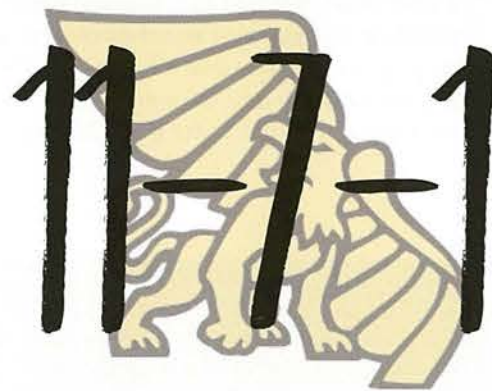
1st Team MIAA
Cassidy Menke

3rd Team MIAA
Bailey Dervin

Honorable Mention
Ashlyn Powers
Paige Phipps
Taylor Grant

MIAA Scholar Athlete
Bailey Dervin
Taylor Grant
Paige Phipps
Ashlyn Powers

MIAA Honor Roll
Bridget Blessie
Cassidy Chappell
Sydney Cluck
Maddy Cowell
Sarah Dervin
Bailey Ketcham
Lexie Martin
Megan Maenner
Kaitlyn Unland



Tennis



Missouri Western's tennis team had a tough season with a low overall winning score of 4-15. Although competitively the team did not reach its goal and make a statement with regional or national competitions, the Griffons are gaining momentum and looking forward to the coming season.

This season was a rebuilding year for Griffon tennis due to four seniors graduating last year leaving this year's team consisting of five freshmen, two sophomores, one junior and one senior student. Second year Griffon Tennis Coach, Shawn Becker, acknowledged the challenges that came with having a young team, stating that it was a learning experience as a coach and for his team. The season was spent with new players trying to find their identity in a new group, returning players trying to maintain the identity of an already

built team while emerging as leaders and for him it was managing all the differences.

One member of the team who stepped up her role on and off the court was team captain and sophomore student, Sofia Aguilera-Tovar. Tovar says that this year was the toughest one she's had yet at Western. She expressed that with a young team they spent many hours outside of practice working on their skills, making sure they were all academically stable throughout the semester and dealing with unforeseen physical struggles.

"We had to build a lot of confidence with a new team. We had two injured players (our number one and our number two) so I had to step up to number one," Tovar said. "So the lineup went up and we were not as strong as we were supposed to be in each spot. We had



Student Athlete of the Year
Sofia Aguilera-Tovar

Student Athlete of the Year, junior, Sofia Aguilera-Tovar, against Arkansas Tech. The Griffon fell 5-0. Aguilera holds a 17-23 career record.



good matches either way, we had wins.” During the tough season there were great strides that the players made and Tovar could only see the positive changes that showed from the beginning of the season to the end. Becker also stated that even though the team did not reach expectations record wise, they did improve as individuals. “Looking at the team of the players that stepped up, we had phenomenal wins down the stretch where some of our players were competing and beating top 20 players in this region,” Becker said. “Looking at those

matches here and there, that lets me know that we’re okay moving forward, we’ll be fine.” When talking about the future Griffon tennis season, Becker is hopeful. “[Next season’s goal is to] Continue to build on talent, look to get more mentally tough, to find this chemistry that we had as the season wrapped up and take that momentum into next year.” Becker said. Tovar also stated she is looking forward to next season and seeing the growth that the team has made together. Becker talked with his team about the

circumstances that stood against them this year. Yet, through those challenges their talent showed and he hopes their mental toughness will stick. “The girls that are coming back are a group of players that I know I am fans of and I know the school is going to be fans of and they are going to be able to get behind them and root them on and that’s exciting,” Becker said. “I think losing 4 seniors last year people didn’t know who we were, but they are going to know who we are.”

honors

Sophia Aguilera-Tovar
17-23
(Career)

Best Overall Record (Season)

Joanna Abreu Roman

MIAA Honor Roll

Sophia Aguilera
Yasmine El Ghazi

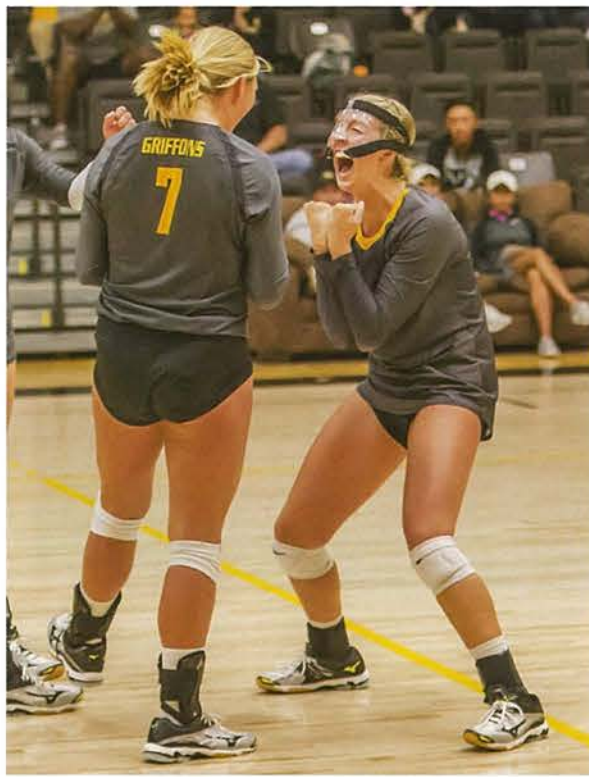
5-17



Volleyball

#5 central missouri - 2
missouri western - 3

The team celebrates their upset against Central Missouri. Central Missouri was ranked 5th in the nation.



Top Center: The Griffons come together after the final point against Fort Hays. Fort Hays came into the match 22-8 while the Griffons were just 15-12.



Western's volleyball team took the season in stride this year after head coach Marian Carbin went on maternity leave, allowing first year Assistant Coach Ashley Petak to take over. With 17 wins during their season, the team proved that nothing could stop them from winning the game.

Assistant Coach Ashley Petak previously coached at Augustana University in Sioux Falls, South Dakota. After stepping in for head coach Carbin, Petak had some big shoes to fill for the rest of the season.

"I was a setter, so I enjoyed training the offensive side of the game," Petak said. "But recently I've really enjoyed training middle blockers and this last season I kind of took the reigns of the whole thing."

Kelsey Olion served as a right side setter during her volleyball career. Olion finished her last season with the team and recalled one of her favorite memories of the season.

"One night that stands out to me is senior night," Olion said. "It was amazing to

see how much my teammates cared about me and it was fun to think back to all the memories that I had made on our home court over the years."

The Griffons had a young team this season. Rachel Friedrichs, a sophomore middle blocker, averaged 2.9 kills per set and had a .337 hitting percentage.

"Playing with a young team was challenging yet exciting," Friedrichs said. "Our inconsistency and young errors showed frequently but it was exciting to know that because we are so young, this talent will be here for later years to come."

The team also finished with a conference record of 9-9. A few losses came from only losing by a few points, giving motivation for next season.

"The season had its highs and lows," Olion said. "We definitely learned a lot from both our wins and our losses, and I know the team will carry those lessons into next season."

honors

Student Athlete of the Year

Kelsey Olion

1st Team MIAA
Rachel Friedrichs

2nd Team MIAA
Kelsey Olion

Honorable Mention MIAA

Stephanie Doak
Kayla Ruff
Blair Russell

MIAA Scholar Athletes

Rachel Friedrichs
Kelsey Olion
Kayla Ruff
Blair Russell

MIAA Honor Roll

Kortney Blaufuss
Amanda Dalbey
Veronica Goranova
Audrey Keim
Rachel Losch
Ashley Mainord
Danielle Moore





Marching Band

Marching to the beat of her own drum, senior and drum major Amanda Sneil led Western's Golden Griffon Marching Band (GGMB) this year.

Sneil has been involved with the extra-curricular activity since her freshman year of high school. When she entered college, Sneil signed up for the cinema program, which has nothing to do with music other than they share a building. But, Sneil decided she still wanted to stay involved in marching band and she's been a member of the GGMB for six years.

"I wanted to continue in the band in

college because of the amazing group of people involved in it. We truly are a big family and we have so much fun," Sneil said.

Sneil's favorite memory of being in GGMB is all the annual trip to Silver Dollar City in Branson.

"We are the opener for the Christmas Lights parade and actually get the park to ourselves for a few hours that morning. The lights in the park are gorgeous and the whole Christmas atmosphere during the parade you can't find anywhere else," Sneil said.

The GGMB has about 100 members each year, and this last season Sneil was picked as

Drum Major by Dr. Gay, director of marching band. Before this year, you could hear her tooting away on her flute.

In order to prepare for their shows and competitions, the band practices on Monday, Wednesday and Friday for a total of 6 hours. However, Sneil usually puts in five to ten her own time depending on how difficult the music is that week.

"Since I am the Drum Major, I need to be sure I know the music very well before rehearsal," Sneil said.

Then on game day, the whole band meets at 7am on the field.

“Since we don’t have access to the stadium normally, this gives us a chance to run the shows on the field we actually have to perform on. We’re all usually very tired since that makes for a long day, but the sunrises are beautiful from the Stadium,” Sneil said.

As one of the drum majors, all eyes are on her to control the performance, know the materials, and act quickly under pressure. It’s a big responsibility, but Sneil loves it.

“It’s equally a lot of fun and a lot of responsibility to help lead the band. Being a drum major has been a great leadership experience for me and has taught me more than I could ever ask for,” Sneil said. There is a sense of pride when we march on the field because I helped make the performance happen.”

Continuing her marching band career may have brought it’s challenges, but Sneil wouldn’t trade the friendships for anything.

“I don’t need awards to love what we do as a band. The lifelong friendships I’ve gained and the family I can always turn to is more than enough.”



The Golden Griffon Marching Band performs during halftime. The band has competed against over 20 schools at the national level.



STUDENT



PORTRAITS

Ready? 1, 2, 3... smile!





ABERER SARAH
ARN MOLLEIGH
ATKINS KAITLYN
BAASE MEGAN
BAASIE KAYLA



BACHMAN RYLIE
BAILEY DANNIELLE
BALD COOPER
BALL MATT
BANKS EVAN



BECKER KAMELA
BEISHIR JORDAN
BENSOUNA YECINE
BERKEMEIER SHELBY



BERRY KYLE
BERTRAM SARAH
BINDER HALEY



BISHOP DERIC
BLAKE-GRAVES CEONDRA

BOEH WILLIAM
BOGART JONATHAN
BOOTH JORDAN
BOYDSTON JONATHAN
BRADLEY MADISON



BRADLEY THOMAS
BRAS-HEARS ASHLEY
BROOKS GARRETT
BROWN MARY
BROWN MORGAN



BROWN NATASHA
BROWNLEE TREVOR
BRUMBAUGH JESSICA
BRYANT MALIK



BUKOSKI MEGAN
BULLOCK EOY
BURSE DAVONTAE



BUTLER JORDAN
BYRD RODERIC





CALHOON CODY
CARMICHAEL DEXTER
CARROLL ADAM
CARTER AUSTIN
CATHCART KEEGAN



CHALENDER JEANANN
CHEENEY HALIEY
CHEREDDY CHANDANA
CHINTA SANHITH
CIRRINOIONE TYRELL



CLARK JOSHUA
CLARK RAMELLO
COHENS IVORY
COLINS LANDRY



COMELLA ELIZABETH
COOK RONESHA
COOLEY MADISON



CORDOVA KIMBER
COULTER HARRISON

CRAWFORD CHRIS
CROUSE JESSICA
CRUZ EDUARDO
CUNNINGHAM DAMYAN
DALTRUP CASSANDRA



DARLING NICHOLAS
DAVIDSON HANNAH
DAVIS ALEXIE
DAVIS KRISTOPHER
DAVIS TERRANCE



DAWKINS MONIQUE
DAYNE DOMINIQUE
DEPIETRO NOELIA
DESHAZO MADI



DIER SHELBY
DIETZ LOGAN
DIXON HANNAH



DODGE ELI
DOERING BRANDEN





DOYLE WILL
EALLEY KAITLYN
ECKERT BRIANNA
EDLIN MATTHEW
EIDSON JESSI



EMRICK DAPHNE
ENGEL EMMA
ESTEBAN ANTONIO
ESTES KENDRA
EVANS DEREK



FARR LAUREN
FATAKI ENGOMA
FILLEY EMILY
FILLEY JAMES



FLOWERS TYLER
FRAZIER KELSEY
FROST AMBER



GARCIA-CORTEZ DANNY
GAYDUSEK INDIGO

GIBLER SARAH
GLORE CAITLIN
GNADE AMBER
GOBBERSON PAUL
GOETZ KELLY



GOODING KAITLYN
GOSSETT CARRIGAN
GOSSETT CHANDLER
GRANBERRY PAUL
GRAY NINA



GREGORY JOHN
GRIFFIN DAJAJN
GRIPPANDO KARLIE
GROMOUSKI TRAVIS



GROOM NIKKI
GROVE TRACI
GUY ALEC



HADDOCK MASON
HADSALL CENTENARY





HAGEN RACHEL
HAGEY AMBER
HALE ELIZABETH
HALL KELSEA
HAMILTON ANTHONY



HAMILTON TANNIS
HANKY MEGAN
HARDIN MACKENZIE
HART BEN
HART GRACE



HARTENSTEIN KYLE
HAYNES EBONY
HAYNES JAROD
HAYWARD LANEY



HEITZ ALISHA
HEITZ KRISTEN
HERRMAN MACKENZIE



HIBLE SHELBY
HILL ZACH



mean while...





HILZER KENZIE
HODGE MICHAEL
HOGAN CHARISSE
HOGAN CHARLES
HOLOUBEK ASHLEY



HOWERY BRETT
HUEY DA VION
HULETT SYDNEY
HULEY MATT
HUMPHREYS DALTON



HUNZIGER ASHLEY
HUPRICH ALISA
INGEBRITSON CHEVY
IRVING ALLEN



JEFFERSON GEORNESHA
JENKINS CANDIOE
JESSMER LEANN



JOHNSON ROBERT
JOHNSON SARAH

JONES DAKOTA
JONES JORDAN
JONES ODELL
JORDAN MARISA
JULION JONATHAN



JUSTICE EMMA
KELLOUGH TARQUIN
KELLY MYIA
KELLY PATRICK
KEMP MARSHAWN



KENDALL HEATHER
KHALIFAH MOHAMMED
KIM JISU
KIM KEVIN



KIPPING COURTNEY
KOELING BLAKE
KONYALIOGLU ARIEL



KOTHE ASHLYN
KRETZER KENDRA





KRIGBAN LOGAN
KYAW AUNG MOE
LANDESS CORY
LANGE LINDSEY
LARNED CAMERON



LAWTON LANCE
LAXSON SHILOH
LE LOC
LEBRETON LAURIANE
LEE CODY



LEE DAEHAN
LEE MADELYNN
LEONARD PRECIOUS
LEWANDOWSKI SANDY



LEWIS SAVANNAH
LIKE DENITRA
LIMING SAMANTHA



LORD JEREMY
LUND CHRISTINA

LUX SKY
MABERY TIFFANY
MACE COREY
MACKABEN HANNAH
MALDONADO ANA



MARTIN LUKE
MARTIN TIERRA
MASON DENISE
MAXWELL ANDREW
MCCAMMON ROBERT



MCCAMY AUBREY
MCCLLOUD TAYLOR
MCCRARY ZAKARY
MCGHEE KARA



MCINTOSH JUSTIN
MOMICHAEL ELIZABETH
MONUTT MONIQUE



MEERS HARRISON
MELONE STEPH





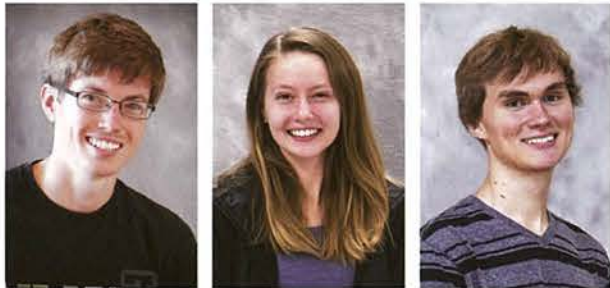
MENESES ALONDRA
MESMAOQUE JONATHAN
MESSER MARIA
MEYER ALEXIS
MEYER MICHAEL



MILLER JOEELYN
MILLER KOLBE
MILLER SAMUEL
MILLS HELAINE
MILLS MARIA



MILLS NICOLE
MIXON SHAINA
MONTIEL-DOMINGUEZ DEIR
MOORE AUTUMN



MOORE JOSIAH
MOORE KATHERINE
MOREHEAD ALEX



MOSS ERIC
MURPHY BEN

MYERS CARSON
MYERS ISAAC
NADING TREVOR
NAGEL AARON
NAMALA SOUMYA



NAREDDY POOJASWI
NEWTON RAVIN
NIERMAN VALERIE
NIKONGOLO NATHAN
NOBLE NATHANIEL



NOBLE TYLER
NOLL MAXIM
NORMAN TANIYA
NULL KENNETH



NUTE JEREMEE
O'GRADY BRIANNA
OLSON JACOB



OYLER OHLOE
PADEN AMANDA





PAPENBERG ZACHARY
PARKER BOSTON
PAULEY BRITTNEY
PAYNE DOMINIQUE
PENDLETON CAMI



PENDLETON HAILEY
PENNOCK SANDRA
PENTON TYRA
PEREZ CIORA
PEREZ ROXANA



PETERSON GARRETT
PETERSON KELSEY
PITCHFORD REBECCA
POKU CALEB



PRAWITZ RACHAEL
PRICE CAMERON
PROSKI-LARGE KATHY



PUDENZ MATTHEW
PULLIAM RICHARD

QUALLS-WOODS MONTRA
REDMOND JALEN
REITAL ALYSHA
RESLER DALTON
RHINEHART RACHEL



RINEHART ABIGAIL
ROBERTS PAUL
RODGERS RACHEL
ROSINSKI BRYANT
ROSSI HEATHER



ROUNKLES RYLEE
RYAN BRENDON
SALLBAUMER JULIE
SALMON MADDIE



SAMENUS CONNOR
SANCHEZ PERLA
SANDERS CHEYENNE



SANON FRANTZ
SANSQUOIE MONICA





SCHALTENBRAND ALEXIS
SCHANK ZACHARY
SCHIESSER SEBASTION
SCHOLZ MATT
SCHUMAN LANE



SCHWERTEL ASHLEY
SEGBAWU RACHEL
SEOK BEOMSEUNG
SHARP COURTNEY
SHELTON MALIK



SHIPP ZACH
SIMPSON ASHLEY
SIMS ALISON
SMITH BEN



SNYDER BRITTANY
STANDLEY MEGAN
STANTON BRAD



STEWART GRAY
STILLWELL KILEY

STONE ANGELIA
STONER AMANDA
SWAVEY TAYLOR
SWING CATHERINE
SWYMLER DEREK



TACKETT CECILIA
TAYLOR JOSHUA
TERRIER LOUISE
TESTORFF EMMA
TETER SYDNEY



THAMMARAT CHAYATU
THAWNG BAWI
THOMAS GABE
TOMMEY JENNIFER



TURNER JUSTIN
UHL SHELBY
UNKLE JOHN



VAN BRUNT COLE
VERMA PAYAL





VIOLETT KARA
VUPPARI RAMBABU
WALKER DYLAN
WARD BROOKE
WATKINS CHRISTY



WATSON CHRIS
WEBER SAMUEL
WEEMS FRED
WELLS ADARIOS
WELLS MORGAN



WHEELER REBECCA
WHITMORE SHAWN
WILKINSON MALEAH
WILKINSON REYHAN



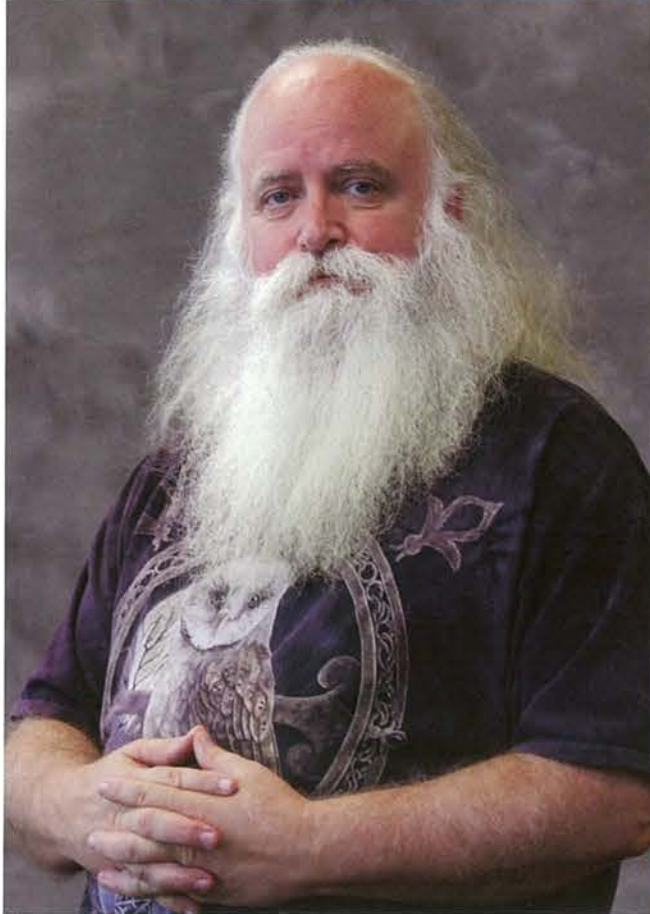
WILLIAMS ALEXIS
WILLIAMS ANTHONY
WILLIAMS CIERRA



WILLIAMS KARA
WILLIAMS LINCOLN



inbetween...





WILLIAMS TARA
WILSON RAYE
WOOD ABIGAIL
WOOD MIRIAH
WUSSOW ISABELLA



WYSS SARA
YANG SONIA
YECINE BENSOUNA
YOUNG KENNETH
YOUNG LILLY



YULGAMOTT SAVANNAH
ZHANG LAULING
ZHORN LOGAN

FACULTY



& STAFF

ADDINGTON RYAN
ADKINS JAMES



ADKISSON PATRICIA
ARNOLD WILLIAM



BAKER DAWN
BAKER JASON



BAUSSET ANA
BOND CHRISTOPHER





COLLINS KELLER ANDREA
CADDEN MICHAEL



CHEVALIER GARY
CLAPP GARY



FRANCISCO CASTILLA ORTIZ
FROGGE JESSICA



LESLIE SUSAN
MEYER SHANA

MEYER TYLER
MEYER YVONNE



MIKITA NATALIE
MILLIS TONI



MILLS MARK
MOLINA SERGIO



MONTEE SUSAN
MOORE GAYWYN





MORSBACH JILL
MOUTRAY ERIN



MULDER JIM
MURRAY LEANNE



NICHOLS JOMEL
NOLD LAURA



OAKES NATASHA
OAKLEAF LINDA

OKAPAL JIM
ORSOHELN PAUL



OTTO ALICIA
OWENS ALEX

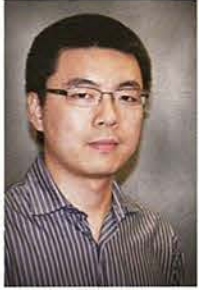


PAYNE PEGGY
PEEPLES CHASE



PICKMAN JERRY
PINTER SARALYNN





POET JEFF
QIAO LONG



QUENSTEELT-MOE GRETCHEN
RAFFENSPERGER MAUREEN



RAHMAT ANN
REINERT BETH



RHOAD JON
RILEY JENNIFER

RINEHART DAWN
RISLOW MADELINE



RITTER MICHAEL
RIVIERA-TAUPIER MIGUEL



ROBERTSON NICKI
ROPS BEN



RUSSELL BILL
SAMPLE VICTORIA





SANDERS SALLY
SCHARTEL-DUNN STEPHANIE



SCHINDLER CAROLYN
SHARP TRACY



SHEPERD DAN
SHERLOCK JENNY MAY



SIGMAN PAULA
SIGRIST KIMBERLY

SKINNER MACHELLE
SLOAN KELLY



SMILIE KIP
SMITH JEFF



PAYNE PEGGY
STEPHENS SHAWNA



STEVENS DAN
STEWART STEPHANIE





STUTTERHEIM AARON
SVOJANOVSKY STAN



SWOPE ELLIOT
TACKETT ALANA



TAPIA JOHN
TAYLOR KAY-LYNNE

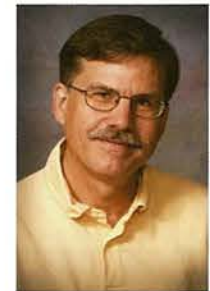


TERRICK DAWN
TODD RIES

TORRESY TORRES
TREAT DEB



TUSHAUS DAVID
TYLER DEATRA



VARTABEDIAN ROBERT
VAUGHN DEBBIE



VEST SHARON
VOIGHT BARBARA





WAGGONER CHRISTI
WALLER MATTEW



WALSH KEVIN
WEDDLE KIM MAY



WEEKS ANNETTE
WEIBERG BRETT



WEIBERG KRISTY
WHIPPLE MATT

WHITE AUBRY
WHITE JESSE



WIDNER VICKY
WILEY TAMMY



WILLENBRINK ROBERT
WILLIAMS ANNA



WILLIAMS DIXIE
WOLFE MICHELLE





WOODFORD JEFF
WOODRUFF PAM



YAN BAOQIANG
YOUTSEY BILL



YUROV KIRILL
ZIEMER CHRISTINE



ZUPTICH MARK

ORGANIZA



TIONS



Sigma Sigma Sigma

Left - Right:

3rd Row: Kaley Dittimore, Brooke Hand, Kayla Johnson, Austin Hoverder, Rebecca Pitchford, Amy Insko, Taylor Claypole, Clare Mass, Kristin Smith & Elizabeth Adams

2nd Row: Kaleigh Pryor, Brittany Bix, Paige Matthews, Faith Kauffman, Paige Kneale, Kristen Hagen, Noelia DePietro, Brielle Caudill, Stefanie Lowe & Lani Bamfield

1st Row: Camile Banez, Alison Stock, Samantha Roberts, Riley Rasche, Marley Winkler & Mackenzie Herrman



Mochila Canvas

Left - Right:

2nd Row: Kori Marshall, Sara Brown, Arniecea Johnson, Dr. Marianne Kunkel, Da Vion Huey, Samantha Lundy & Chastity McCourt

1st Row: Stephaney Ferguson, Samantha Duryee, Mande Greer, Lora Kroush & Megan Standley

Student Social Workers

Left - Right: Dr. Matt Loehr, Tyler Ford, Will Vick, Precious Leonard, Christy Simmons, Nee-Nee Jefferson, Nichole Oswalt, Victoria Clark, Sabrina Cable & Dr. Pam Clary





Debate Team

Left - Right:

2nd Row: Maddie Lantz, Aliyah Hendricks, Beau Berry, Kylar McNeal & Rachel Bertam

1st Row: Jason Edgar (Advisor), Cody Fielden, Bayland Porter, Marcus Triplet, Dianah Hidzir, Lilly Graham, Kallie Steiner & Libby Denny

Not Pictured: Chris Miles & Mike Smith

Center for Multicultural Education

Left - Right: Latoya Fitzpatrick, Dianah Hidzir & Alexis Williams





Alpha Sigma Alpha

Left - Right:

5th Row: Samantha Gonzalez, Samantha Bullock, Mason Peynado, Ally Riker, Adreanna Starnes, Medeya Granado, McKenzie Blystone, Nayeli Romo, Hailey Kober

4th Row: Jennifer Puett (Advisor), Jessica Phelps, Maggie Palmer, Ashlee Topping, Kelsy Sparks, Darby Webb, Mandy Curran, Andrea Denton, Cheyanne Kitchen, Hannah Pointer, Delanie Maize, Brooke Bell (Advisor)

3rd Row: Crystal Enciso, Rahman Reshnee, Mickayla Fenimore, Lilly Young, Lacey Hawkins, Madisun Conrad, Abbii Knox, Morgan Barnett, Mallory Saladen

2nd Row: Frankie Lemar, Karissa Lovekamp, Kayla Foley, Abbey Williamson, Kenzie Berten, Kaylea Frye, Savannah Sanai, Hayley Tiller, Sunnie Helmer

1st Row: Joni Thomas, Megan Chism, Tiffany Mabery, Abby Sisk, Rachel Lau, Lydia Reynolds & Shea Sears



National Wildlife Society

From Top - Left - Right:

Dr. Cary Chevalier, Nicholas Darling, Blake Koelling

Bradley Thomas, James Filley

Derie Bishop, Isaac Whitman, Justin Fry

Caitlin Glore, Samuel Miller, Rachael Domann

Bethany Bolander, Madi DeShazo, Koby Lowe

Zachary Marks, Kaitlyn Atkins, Tori McNutt, Steven Brown, Brandon Doering,

Brandon Ryan, Logan Krigbrown, Chris Watson

Cassandra Daltrup, Mackenzie Marks, Allison Paul, Tyler Flowers

Samuel Weber, Bryan Rosinski, Katie Lavelle & Steph Melore



Alpha Omega

Left - Right:

2nd Row: Morgan Wells, Kayla Saltsgaver, Kaitlyn Atkins,
 Alexie Davis, Desiree Brown, Ashley Hunziger, Bailee Jones,
 Amanda Frakes, Nacaela James, Rikky Hunt, Marisa Jordan
 1st Row: Ryanna Rempel, Precious Leonard, Mallory Allen,
 Shelby Dier, Alysha Reital, Megan Hanley, Joy Earl,
 Caroline Cramsey, Geornesha Jefferson & Hannah

Cosgrove

Newman Center

Left - Right:

2nd Row: Matt Ball, Matt Scholz, Lincoln Williams, Skylor
 Foli, Paul Gobberson, Leeds Haroldson, Claire Haroldson,
 Chris Crawford, Nicholas Kempf & Jacob Heinerikson
 1st Row: Mary Branson, Denise Mason, Claire Popp,
 Caroline Cramsey, Kara Violet, Kaitlin Smith, Elizabeth
 Comella, Heather Daugherty & Kristin Smith





History Club

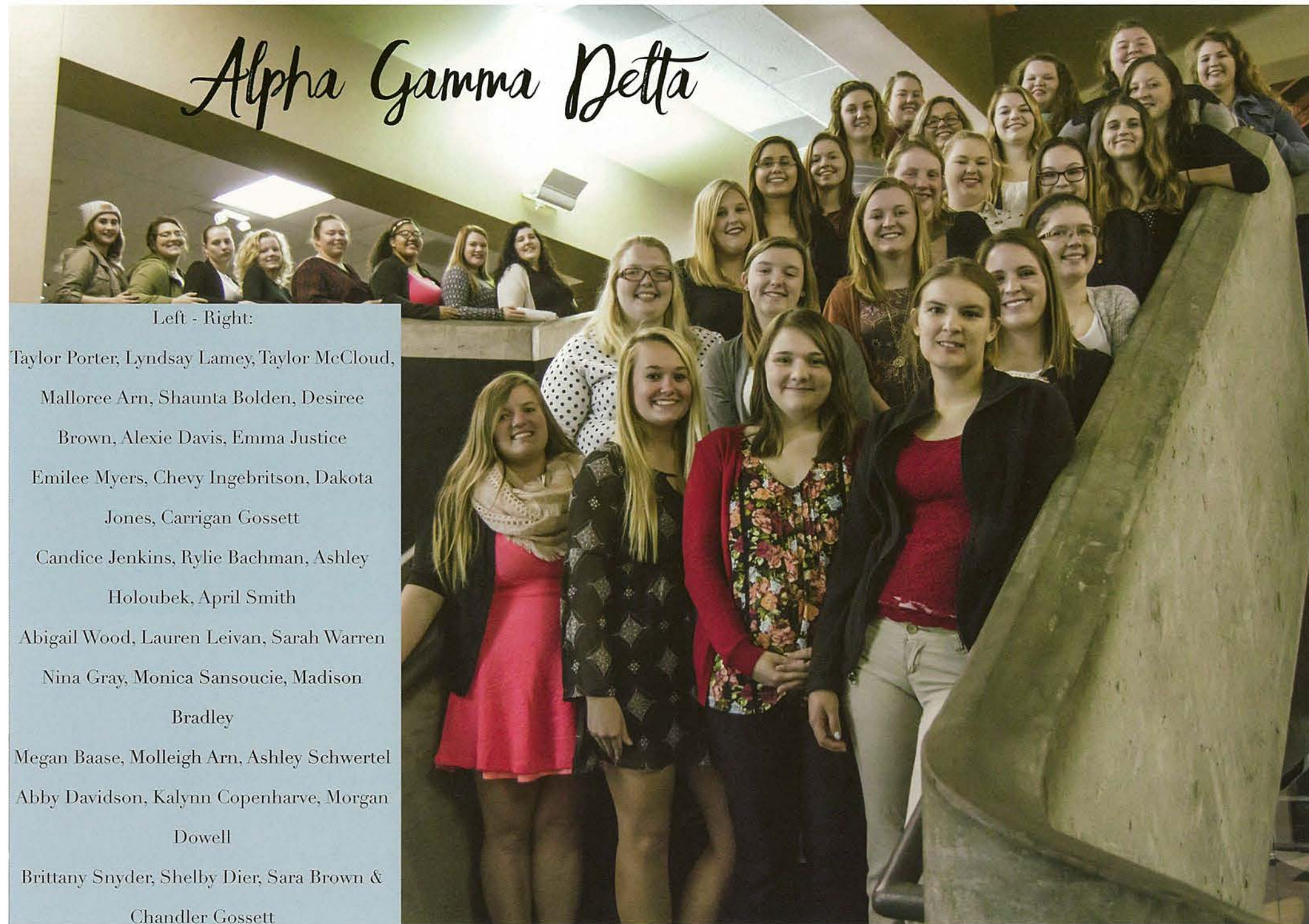
Left - Right: Paula Hayward, Isaac Carter, Roberta Gartner, Shane Resler, Catherine Swing, Cheryl Anderson, Dr. Jay Lemanski, Ashley Coats & Evan Banks

The National Society of Leadership and Success

Left - Right: Derek Evans, May Grooms, Amanda Stoner, Nicole Mills, Kelsey Frazier, Jasmine Taylor, Brianna Eckert, Sarah Bertram, Sandy Lewandowski, Kelsea Hall & Matthew Pudenz



Alpha Gamma Delta



Left - Right:

Taylor Porter, Lyndsay Lamey, Taylor McCloud,

Malloree Arn, Shaunta Bolden, Desiree

Brown, Alexie Davis, Emma Justice

Emilee Myers, Chevy Ingebritson, Dakota

Jones, Carrigan Gossett

Candice Jenkins, Rylie Bachman, Ashley

Holoubek, April Smith

Abigail Wood, Lauren Leivan, Sarah Warren

Nina Gray, Monica Sansoucie, Madison

Bradley

Megan Baase, Molleigh Arn, Ashley Schwertel

Abby Davidson, Kalynn Copenharve, Morgan

Dowell

Brittany Snyder, Shelby Dier, Sara Brown &

Chandler Gossett



Alpha Kappa Psi

Left - Right:

3rd Row: Kyle Fuson, Alexis Williams, Madison Welde, Paige Shelter, Melissa Harris, Raymon Blades, Aaron Nagel, Andrew Fuller, John Jenkins, Fabian Heil, Tyler Hampton, Colton Saunders, Dr. Phillip Frank & Jackson Girdner

2nd Row: Mackenzie Shelter, Jenna Page, Brittany White, Alayna Meneses, Shaina Mixon, Cortney Moncrieg, Miu Sutton & Shelby Berkemeler

1st Row: Cami Pendleton, Bobbi Jo Stalker, David Sanchez, Anotonio Cristobal, Whitney Norton, Matthew Regan & Katelyn Peterson



Student Government Association

Left - Right:

3rd Row: Asya Beasley, Nick Hanlan, Eli Dodge, Kyle Fuson, Gabe Thomas & Deir Montiel-Dominguez

2nd Row: Rayvn Highsmith, Myia Kelly, Reece Christensen, Masson Haddock, Britane Hubbard, Mallory Saladen, Breanna Bland, Tannis Hamilton & Alexis Williams

1st Row: Logan Zorn, Brad Stanton, Alec Guy, Connor Samenus, Matthew Scholz, Gillian Evans & Mon'Tra Qualls-Woods

Sigma Alpha Jota

Left - Right:

3rd Row: Elise Hepworth (Advisor), Carol Hare (Advisor), Marissa Sunderland, Sydnie Holzfaster, Raven Reed, Katie Gregory, Samantha Schroeder, Sarah Lee, Alexandria Null & Mandy Snell

2nd Row: Kelly Oliphant, Skyla Booth, Kara Harrison, Logann Lawson, Hannah Adams, Morgan Larrison & Kate Chapman

1st Row: Courtney Carter, Jenni Cobb, Kelsey Peterson, Kylah Bateman & Emelita Barker





French/German Club

Left - Right:

3rd Row: Elizabeth Stoak, Andrew Maxwell, Drew Sale, Katherine Moore
& Alisa Huprich

2nd Row: Taylor Swavey, Cami Pendleton, Claudine Evans, Caroline
Whiteman, Nicole Bradley, Cydney Puckett, Anne Davies, Emma Crabb,
Maria Messer, Jesse Graham & Evan Banks

1st Row: Sarah Reynolds, Jamie Moore & Ibrahim AlQahtani

Griffon News

Left - Right:

3rd Row: Tommy Marshall, Charles Hogan, Robert Bergland (Advisor),
Johnathan Jenkins, Brooke Anderson, Sydnie Holzfafter
2nd Row: Jessica Kopp, Kelsea Hall, Mary Beth Rosenauer, Juna Carlisle
1st Row: Brett Howery, Derek, Chloe Rhein & Caleb May





Residential Life

Left - Right:

3rd Row: Indigo Gaydusek, Asya Beasley, Grace Galberth, Paul Granberry, Bobby Coon, Eli Dodge, Emelita Barker, Athyna Nguyen, James Kearney, Josiah Berridge, Adarius Wells, Cooper Bald, Annie Algaier, Matt Scholz, Kaley Dittimore, Cal Griencewic, Chelsea James, Austin Myers, Kate Chapman, Logan McKenzie, Amber Davis, Bethany Mullen, Bailey Barron, Nathan Roberts, Paige Burns, Caroline Cramsey, Jake Sloan, Amy McLauren

2nd Row: Josh Mackenzie, Kylie Hough, Makenna Snyder, Jesse Johnson, Tauree Robinson, Dasia Johnson, Savannah Lewis, Joanna Abreu-Roman, Cali Slaughter, Taylor McCloud, Mandy Nurski, Yishka Chin, Madison Baker, Natalie Miller

1st Row: Ruth Augustin, Emma Martinez, Mon'Tra Qualls-Woods & Alexis Williams



Beta Beta Beta

Left - Right:

2nd Row: Dr. Mark Mills, Tess Campbell, Matthew Edlin, Jaime Moore,
Audrey Keim, Cassandra Mathern, Isaac Myers
1st Row: Brittney Pauley, Helaine Mills, Savannah Lewis & Chris Watson

Western Activities Council

Left - Right: Kelsie Ream, Brianna Gaskill, Perla Sanchez, Natalie Miller, Alex Richardson, Taylor McCloud & Alliya Newbold





Shotgun Club

Left - Right:

Amy McLauren (Advisor), Matt Scholz, Ethan Pulliam, Josh Clark,
Jodi Rhodes, Jacob Dovel, Taylor Houx, Jacob Heinerikson, Aaron
Person, Robby McCammon & Max Noll

Not Pictured: Sarah Johnson & Branden Doering

Christian Campus Fellowship

Left - Right:

3rd row: Nathan Stewart, Elizabeth Reh, Shelby Hicks, Josh
Hughart, Liam Roach, Alyssa Heldenbrand & Ryan Heldenbrand

2nd Row: Marisa Jordan, Nacaela James, McCabe Davis, Julia
Beier, Kelsi Plank & Sam Jenne

1st Row: Rikky Hunt, Chris Plank, Chase Ford & Rick Randleman







The Griffon STAFF

The staff of *The Griffon* is responsible for the reporting and photography that carefully went into each story throughout the yearbook. These Writers and photographers worked dilligently on top of their normal courseload to produce their best quality work.

From the beginning of the Fall semester to the end of the Spring semester they learned first hand in a

newsroom on campus. They worked on story after story, many times two or three at a time.

These students are the voice and eyes of the stories you read. You can rest assured as you miander the pages you're getting a student's perspective of the people and events on campus. Without their hard work and dedication, this year's edition of the yearbook may not be in your hands.





MWSUYearbook: Dianah Hidzir
#Staff Writer #GriffonYearbook #MWSU #GoGriffons #Yearbook



MWSUYearbook: Elijah Smith
#Staff Writer #GriffonYearbook #MWSU #GoGriffons #Yearbook



MWSUYearbook: Allie Monical
#Staff Writer #GriffonYearbook #MWSU #GoGriffons #Yearbook



MWSUYearbook: William Nolan
#Staff Writer #GriffonYearbook #MWSU #GoGriffons #Yearbook



MWSUYearbook: Janel Darnell
#Staff Writer #GriffonYearbook #MWSU #GoGriffons #Yearbook



MWSUYearbook: Cole McMillian
#Staff Writer #GriffonYearbook #MWSU #GoGriffons #Yearbook



MWSUYearbook: Morgan Hughes
#Staff Writer #GriffonYearbook #MWSU #GoGriffons #Yearbook



MWSUYearbook: De'Ondre Ross
#Staff Writer #GriffonYearbook #MWSU #GoGriffons #Yearbook



2016-2017 Editors

2016 - 2017 Awards:

1. 2017 David L. Adams Apple Award -
Second Place Best Yearbook Cover (2016-17 book)
2. 2017 David L. Adams Apple Award -
Second Place Best Academic Spread (Two Page) (2015-2016 book, Mens Basketball)
3. Columbia Scholastic Press, Gold Circle Award -
3rd Place Best Academic Spread (2015-2016 book, The Next Convocation)
- 4 -15. Missouri College Media Association (2015-2016 book)
First Place: Feature Writing, Personality Sketch, Student Life Design
Second Place: Student Life Design, Overall Theme Development
Third Place: Sports Photography, Personality Sketch
Honorable Mention: 2- Personality Sketch, 2- Sports Design, Student Life Design
16. Walsworth Gallery of Excellence

Bryant Scott, junior, Editor-in-Chief. Scott is a Convergent Journalism major who joined the *The Griffon* staff in 2014 as a staff writer. In the spring semester of 2015 he was asked to take over as Interim Design Editor by Jodi Stamback, the EIC of the 2014-2015 yearbook. In fall of 2015 incoming EIC Jessie Eidson asked him to take on the role as Design Editor. Winning a 2016 Apple Award for second place best cover design and a Gold Circle Award for 3rd Place spread design, Scott then took over as EIC for the 2016-2017 publication. His design for the cover won the Apple Award for second place best cover design, for the second year in a row.



MWSUYearbook: Bryant Scott
#EditorEIC #GriffonYearbook #MWSU #GoGriffons #Yearbook



Joni Thomas, senior, Design Editor. Thomas, a Graphic Design major joined *The Griffon* Staff in 2015 as Assistant Design Editor. Thomas was such an asset to the team, she was asked to return as Design Editor for the 2016-2017 publication. Joni has proven to be an invaluable member to the editorial staff. Thomas is extremely organized and helps keep her peers in the same shape. She had final say on all designs and has designed a great number of spreads herself throughout the publication. Thomas recently earned a second place award for her student life design for the 2015-2016 yearbook.



MWSUYearbook: Jasmine Taylor
#Editor #GriffonYearbook #MWSU #GoGriffons #Yearbook



Jasmine Taylor, senior, Social Media Director. Taylor is a Convergent Journalism major who joined *The Griffon* staff of 2015-2016 as a staff writer. Taylor's exceptional skill using and growing social media would be an asset to a publication that previously had minimal effort put into the upkeep and growth of its online presence. Taylor helped expand the publications social media footprint by over 200 percent. She now has a passion desire to use social media in, and possibly, as her career after graduation.

Blair Russell, senior, Photos and Sports Editor. Russell is a Convergent Journalism major, and has been a part of *The Griffon* staff since 2014. Starting as a staff writer and photographer, her skills were noticed immediately. Her artistic photography style opened the door for new and exciting design. Russell is also a former college athlete. Her close relationships with coaching staff and other college athletes allowed her to guide our writers to the best sources for interviews about sports programs at Missouri Western.



MWSUYearbook: Blair Russell
#CopyEditor #GriffonYearbook #MWSU #GoGriffons #Yearbook



MWSUYearbook: Joni Thomas
#Editor #GriffonYearbook #MWSU #GoGriffons #Yearbook



Justin Janorschke, junior, Managing Editor. Janorschke is a Convergent Journalism major who switched from the engineering department. He has been on staff at *The Griffon* since 2015 as a staff writer. Going onto the 2016 school year, the publication needed a voice of reason, and someone to 'Tell it like it is.' Janorschke's sense of humor kept the staff lighthearted and added a grounded feeling to the office.



MWSUYearbook: Justin Janorschke
#Editor #GriffonYearbook #MWSU #GoGriffons #Yearbook



MWSUYearbook: Gillian Evans
#CopyEditor #GriffonYearbook #MWSU #GoGriffons #Yearbook



Gillian Evans, senior, Copy Editor. Evans, a Public Relations major, joined *The Griffon* as copy editor. Her exceptional performance in a class by the same name and her gentle coaching style, made her the perfect choice. As copy editor, Evans has helped our staff writers and editors improve their writing and made sure every story going into the book was formatted and written properly at the writers' highest capability. Evans has been a tremendous help to the publication and brings in a skill all her own.

Tommy Marshall, senior, Editor. Marshall, a Convergent Journalism major, has been a staple of *The Griffon* editorial staff for three years. His expertise and knowledge of past books has helped us avoid mistakes along the way. Marshall, an editor of all trades helped everywhere he was needed without complaint or fail. He was happy to make the best of his time and assist with everything from layout to ad sales.



MWSUYearbook: Thomas Marshall
#CopyEditor #GriffonYearbook #MWSU #GoGriffons #Yearbook





MWSUYearbook: Adeb Alsaawi
#Editor #GriffonYearbook #MWSU #GoGriffons #Yearbook



Adeb Alsaawi, Graduate Student, Web Editor. Alsaawi, a master in media and an international student from Saudi Arabia, joined the editorial staff of *The Griffon* in 2016. He started the semester by completely redesigning the website for *The Griffon*. Our newly-designed website helped attract new readership and better showcase our past work. Alsaawi has made a lasting impression on the entire staff and is always working hard to accomplish his endeavors with flying colors.

Kartheek Gaddameedi, Graduate Student, Portraits Editor. Gaddameedi, a master in media and an international student from India, joined the editorial staff of *The Griffon* in 2016. His quiet and friendly demeanor and willingness to help made Gaddameedi an exceptional choice to photograph our student body. He photographed over 400 students and faculty in on-campus events tailored to student traffic, to give every student the opportunity to have their photo included in the publication.



MWSUYearbook: Kartheek Gaddameedi
#Editor #GriffonYearbook #MWSU #GoGriffons #Yearbook



MWSUYearbook: Rachael Bergeron
#Editor #GriffonYearbook #MWSU #GoGriffons #Yearbook



Rachael Bergeron, senior, Assistant Portraits Editor. Bergeron, a Graphic Design major, joined *The Griffon* in 2015 as a staff writer. Her experience with photography and friendly nature allowed her to excel at photographing our student body and faculty.

Gathering of the Journalists

MISSOURI WESTERN HOSTS THE 2017 MISSOURI
COLLEGE MEDIA ASSOCIATION CONFERENCE

Far Right: Rob Curley spoke at the conference during regular sessions and as the keynote speaker. Curley is the Editor in Chief of The Spokesman-Review in Spokane, Washington.



Editor-in-Chief's Final Thoughts

The 2016 - 2017 academic year has been a roller coaster for many of us. As an institution that prides itself in diversity and celebration of all cultures, Missouri Western has been through a barrage of emotions. We have lost celebrities we grew up with, witnessed the election of an unlikely presidential candidate and watched incredible sports championships.

Creating the 91st volume of Missouri Western's yearbook, *The Griffon* has been just as emotional. Twenty-three students came together with a common goal; poured their blood, sweat, tears and valuable time into the publication of this year's book.

Each one of the writing, photography and editorial staff who worked on this book has left behind evidence of their dedication to the spirit of the institution. Their constant involvement in every department and event shines through their words and photographs.

Those same people have poured a part of their soul into this book. As you grazed the pages of the book, they hope you had the opportunity to experience the stories as

they unfolded at the time, or were able to vicariously immerse yourself into an event you may have missed.

As the Editor-in-Chief, it was my job to inspire the passion and creativity that went into creating a comprehensive, theme-driven composition of the 2016 - 2017 academic year.

Every single aspect of this yearbook was inspired by one single word: When. I wanted to take a timeless look at the noumenon of our unique multitude. I could not have done that without each and every person that worked with me to carry out the sizable task of piecing together the yearbook.

I don't have the real estate to thank every single person to the extent that they ALL deserve, but I want to express my strongest sentiments:

Joni: You definitely made the design of this book come together. You sacrificed quite a bit to adhere to the theme, and made sure every single design was perfect. Your extreme organization kept every thing in its place and there was a place for everything. There is no way this book would have been what it

is without you. The stress you experienced wasn't in vain. Thank you, from the bottom of my heart.

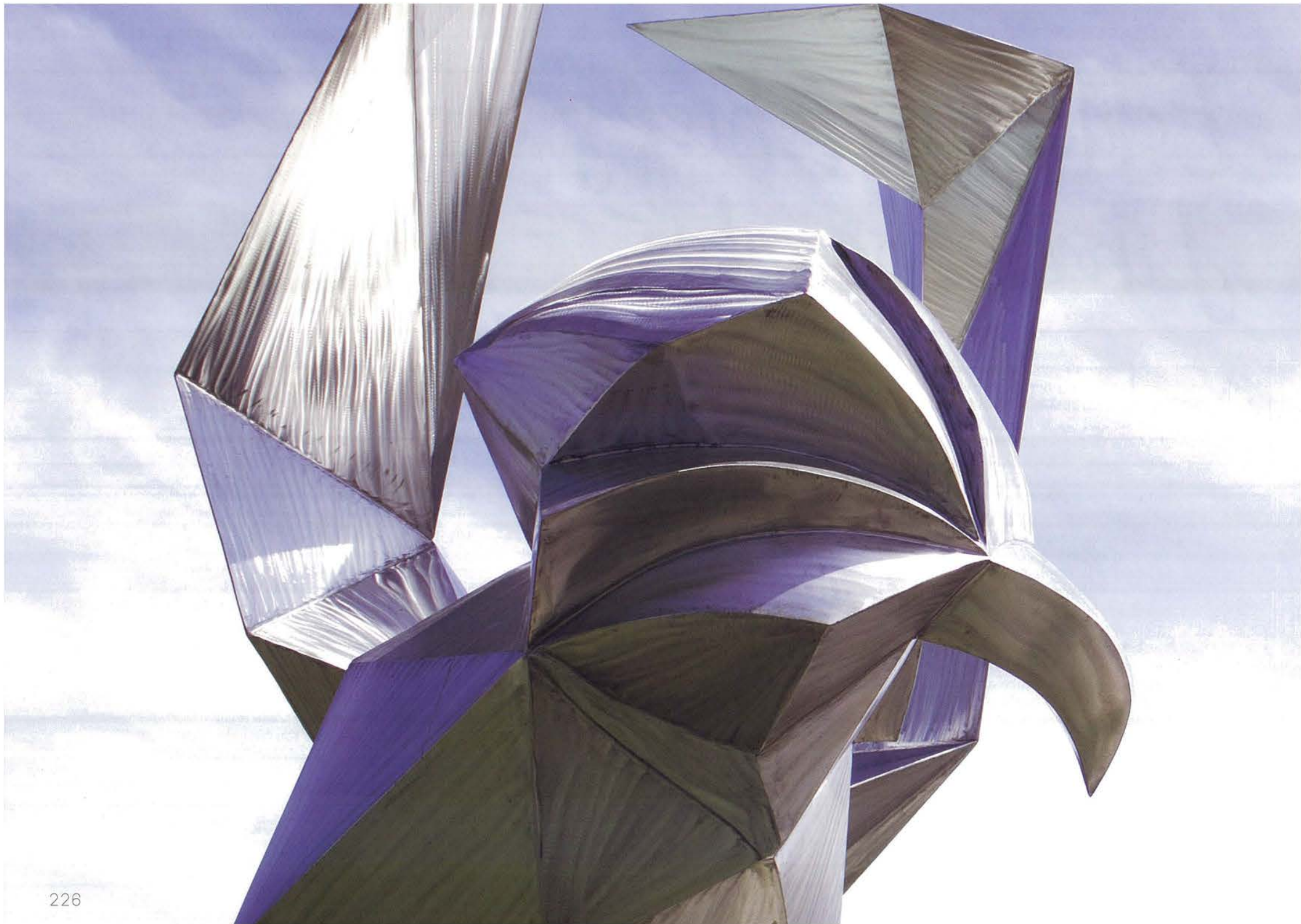
Jasmine: Thank you for always being so willing to do what it took to capture the visual of the story for social media publication. Your dedication to our brand online was beyond my highest expectations. Your positivity in the office and subtle excitement about everything was refreshing and always lifted the mood.

James: Your guidance and persistence in reminding us of deadlines was invaluable. I always took your advice as the next learning experience in my quest to lead my staff to be the best they could be.

Blair: You went above and beyond every day. Your dedication to the success of the students was inspiring. I watched you grow as a leader and as an artist and, I know you're going to do amazing things, wherever you go and whatever you do. You have the right attitude and the skills to change lives. Go do great things.

Thank you,

Bryant S. Scott





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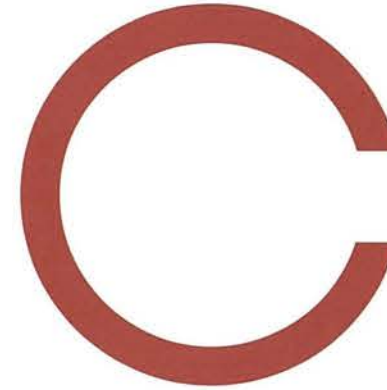
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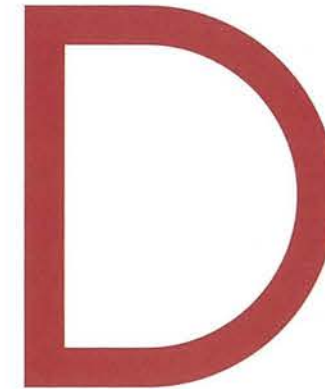


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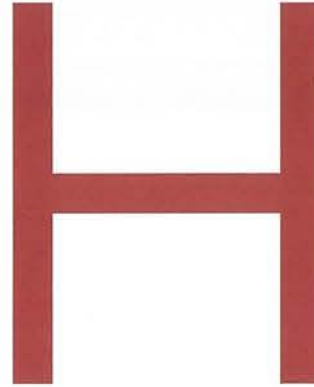
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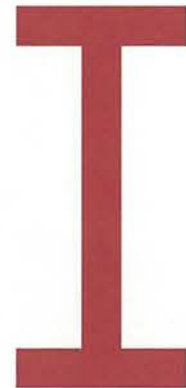


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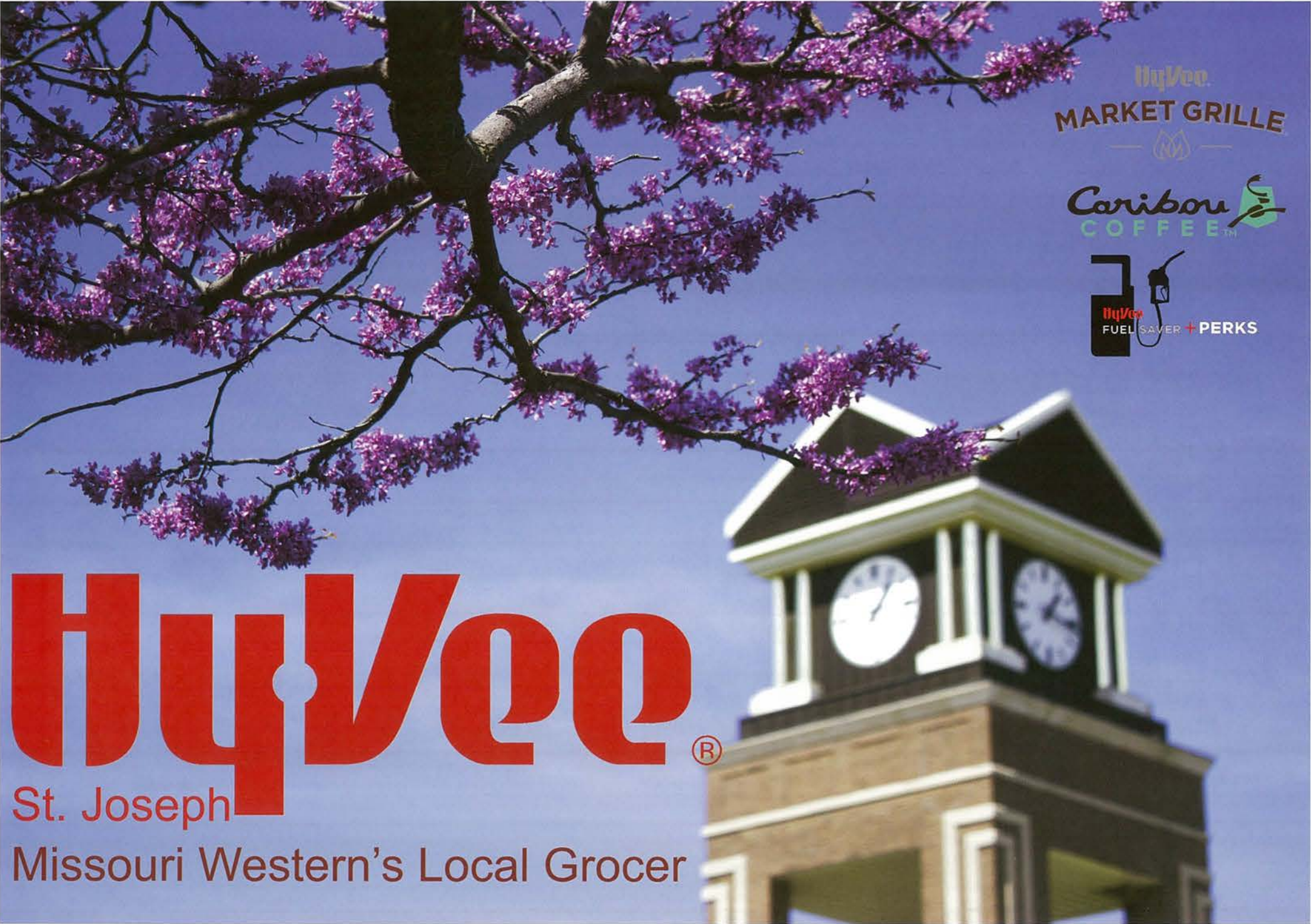
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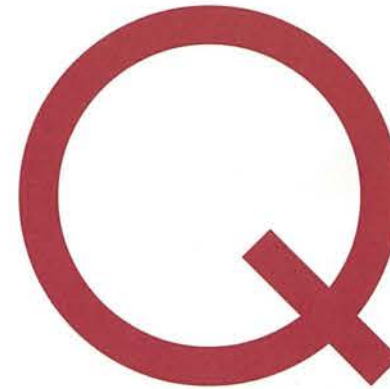
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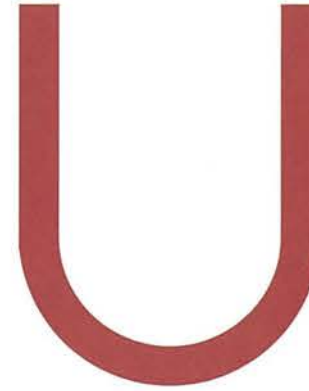
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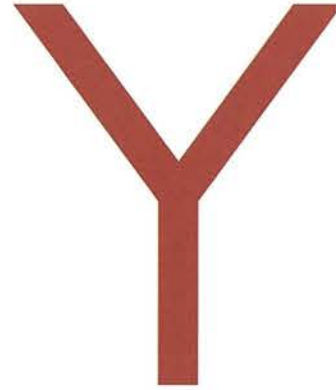
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