

Missouri Western

The magazine of Missouri Western State University | Spring 2014



Kuwait



Indonesia



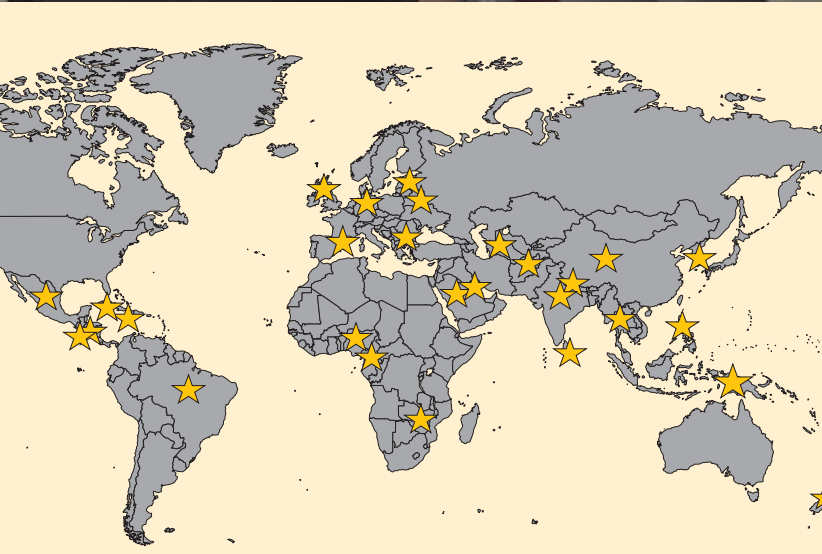
South Korea



Brazil



Brazil



South Korea



South Korea

International Students Enrich Campus Community pg. 18



Saudi Arabia



Saudi Arabia



Andorra



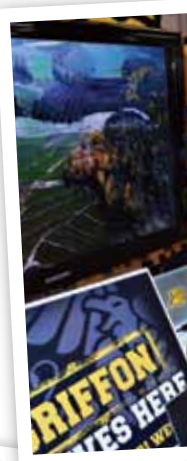
Honduras



Brazil

Missouri Western's international flavor

The campus and community are being introduced to new cultures and foreign countries, thanks to Missouri Western's increasing internationalization. The Office of International Student Services and international students host an International Fair every year. Also, Jianhua Lian, a professor from Xidian University in China, is teaching at Missouri Western this year, and she and her Chinese language students planned a Chinese New Year celebration this spring.





Dear Friends,

In 2008, when I began my presidency, there were seven international students at Missouri Western State University. One of my immediate priorities was to better prepare our graduates for careers in a global marketplace by increasing the number of international students and faculty members on campus and increasing study away opportunities.

We have made tremendous strides as a University toward these efforts. We have increased from seven students to 87 in the spring of 2014, representing more than 25 countries. Opportunities to study abroad have sent Missouri Western students to Belize, India, Honduras, China and more. While we continue to focus on this area and pursue even further growth, we have made remarkable strides in just six years.

The growth in our international student population and in our study away opportunities has been the result of years of hard work and commitment from faculty and staff members across campus. Missouri Western has put in several pieces of infrastructure to make this happen, including creating an International Student Services Office and hiring a director, tightening



Admissions processes for international students, allocating funds for international recruitment trips and establishing agreements with many international universities.

It is essential that our students have the opportunities

to develop strong cross-cultural competencies and are familiar with others who are quite different from themselves. Creating an international student experience in St. Joseph allows our students to have a broader understanding of other cultures and improve their interpersonal communication abilities. These skills will serve them well in increasingly global business environments and in increasingly diverse communities.

The internationalization of our campus carries enormous benefits for our students, but also for our faculty, staff and our region. We can all be proud of the increasingly global footprint of Missouri Western State University.

Robert A. Vartabedian

Robert A. Vartabedian
President,
Missouri Western State University

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MISSOURI WESTERN MAGAZINE

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Missouri Western State University is an equal opportunity institution.

Pre-med students benefit from changes

MU Medical School Agreement

This spring, Missouri Western joined a program with the University of Missouri-Columbia School of Medicine in an effort to bring more doctors to rural areas.

MU School of Medicine's Bryant Scholars Pre-Admissions Program encourages future physicians to practice in underserved rural areas by allowing undergraduates interested in rural medicine to earn pre-admission to its medical school. The program had agreements with six higher education institutions in the state since it began 20 years ago, and Missouri Western joined six more colleges and universities in the agreement.

Now, Missouri Western students finishing their sophomore year have the option of applying for pre-admission to MU School of Medicine if they meet the criteria. Dr. Jason Baker, professor of biology, is Missouri Western's program coordinator.

The effort to expand the MU program came from the Area Health Education Centers, and Dr. Baker credits the local group with helping Missouri Western be included in the new agreements.

One benefit to students, he said, was that they will be among a smaller pool of applicants for MU's medical school. And, earning medical school admission at the end of their sophomore year takes a lot of pressure off them when they are ready to graduate.

The agreement also gives Missouri Western another recruiting tool for outstanding students.

With the addition of MU, Missouri Western now has pre-admission agreements with the University of Missouri-Kansas City School of Medicine and Kirksville College of Osteopathic Medicine, and an early-matriculation and early-admission agreement with Kansas City University of Medicine and Bioscience. ■

Ensworth Medical Scholarship Fund

Missouri Western students who are interested in medical school have a better opportunity for scholarships, thanks to a change in the Ensworth Medical Scholarship Fund.

The fund had previously been set up through U.S. Bank in St. Joseph, Mo. to offer loan monies to students in medical school. A legal change for tax purposes has now placed the money in the Missouri Western State University Foundation and will now be offered as scholarships instead of loans. Additionally, only Missouri Western students are now eligible to apply.

"We will now be able reward some of our strongest students," said Dr. Jason Baker, professor of biology and coordinator of the program. "It is a great benefit." ■



Theatre shines

"Drowsy Chaperone," left, and "The Producers," right, were two of the Missouri Western's great theatre productions this past season. Tee Quillin directed "Drowsy Chaperone" and Dallas Henry directed "The Producers."

Cinema students score super

Creating an ad for the Super Bowl is something most college students can only dream about, but the Hy-Vee grocery store in St. Joseph gave Missouri Western that opportunity for Super Bowl XLVIII on Feb. 2. Students in Dallas Henry's Commercial Production class produced two 30-second spots for St. Joseph, Mo.-area audiences that aired in the second half of the game.

"Creating a real spot for a real client to be aired during the most-watched television broadcast of the year is the

best learning experience," said Henry, assistant professor of theatre and cinema. "It raises the stakes. It's not much different from what I would have done with my production company."

Henry said he and Brad McAnally, store director at the St. Joseph Hy-Vee, started talking about the project last summer. McAnally visited Henry's class last fall, and students pitched their concepts to him. The commercial highlighted Hy-Vee's Fuel Saver card by depicting the celebration dances of

several shoppers after they discover how much they will save on their next purchase of gasoline.

Henry wrote the spot and was executive producer. Chris Rayle, from St. Joseph, was producer. Blair Stalder, from Liberty Hill, Texas, was director, and Kelsey Houser, from St. Joseph, was assistant director. Stalder and Houser each edited one of the spots.

"We just knew it was a big deal," Houser said. "We had to be focused to make sure we got it right."

The crew started at 5:30 a.m. Jan. 20 and wrapped at 9 p.m. after some outside shots were delayed because of weather.

"Organization was a huge part of the production," Stalder said. "It's not just time management, but making sure all the equipment is ready to use when it's needed."

Although the commercial production process was very similar to what students will experience if they go on to a career in the field, including state-of-the-art equipment purchased recently by the Department of Theatre and Cinema, there was one significant difference, Henry said. The collaborative, creative atmosphere on this set was something you very rarely see.

"Before every shot, we all got together and talked about what we needed to do to get the best shot possible. We all contributed in our own special way to make every shot work," he said.

"It was fun," Houser said. "The employees in it were really Hy-Vee employees, and they were fun to work with."

Stalder and Houser were also recently recognized with Kansas City Regional ADDY awards for their cinematography. Stalder was recognized



Top: Cinema students film their Super Bowl television commercial at the local Hy-Vee; bottom: Matt Wright '12 agreed to act in the commercial; p. 5: Blair Stalder and Kelsey Houser prepare to shoot a scene for the spot.

experience



for three videos promoting Missouri Western, and Houser with one, titled, “Our Campus is Awesome.” At a February ceremony in Kansas City, the two each won one Silver ADDY Award. Their videos advanced to the national competition.

Both Stalder and Houser credit Henry with their outstanding experiences. “I can’t tell you how much I learned here,” Houser said. “He has helped me so much. I owe him a lot.” ■

An opportunity to earn your degree

If you know someone who attended college but never earned a bachelor’s degree, Missouri Western’s Back to Western initiative may be the answer to help them earn that degree. The program began last fall, and utilizes the University’s Bachelor of General Studies that was approved in 2012.

Dr. Gordon Mapley, Executive Director and Dean of the Western Institute, noted that there are more than 700,000 adult Missourians who have credits toward a bachelor’s degree they have not completed.

“Adults who have used options such as the Bachelor of General Studies to

earn a degree advance their careers and increase their financial contributions to their family and community,” he said. The Western Institute is directing the initiative.

Missouri Western’s BGS program is great for students who have a lot of credit hours. It allows those who enroll to choose two minors to create a custom major, typically using many credits they already have. Dr. Mapley said at least three adults have been able to complete BGS requirements by taking four or fewer additional credits this spring semester. Additionally, many individuals who are working toward the BGS are

Foundation Notes

New Foundation Board members

Three people joined the Missouri Western State University Foundation Board of Directors in February 2014: Lisa Norton of LAN Resources, LLC/BioZyme, St. Joseph, Mo.; Brent Porlier ’82, Porlier Outdoor Advertising Co., Foristell, Mo.; and Jason Grayson ’98, Hillshire Brands of St. Joseph.

John Sublett Logan Foundation gift

Trustees of the John Sublett Logan Foundation recently notified Missouri Western’s Foundation that it is the recipient of \$90,000. The funds will be used for scholarships for both undergraduate and graduate students and a summer research program for faculty members in the Craig School of Business.

“Time and again, we have seen how much it means to students to receive scholarships,” said Jerry Pickman ’85, vice president for University Advancement. “For many students, scholarships determine whether or not they can continue their education.” ■

able to complete the degree online.

Between December 2013 and February 2014, the Western Institute advised more than 70 adults seeking to complete a bachelor’s degree using the BGS.

Dr. Mapley noted that participation in the program is not limited to former Missouri Western students, because adults may transfer credits from other institutions to participate and earn a degree.

To learn more, please visit missouriwestern.edu/completion, or contact Tammy Glise or Stacy Turner at the Western Institute, (816) 271-4100. ■

Great gathering space on campus



Students have a new place to gather on campus, thanks to the generosity of a local family. This spring, the University dedicated the Kelley Commons, a beautiful outdoor patio outside the Blum Union.

It is named for the Kelley family, which includes the parents, Jean Kelley and the late James Kelley; children, Jeanie Grahl '72, Molly Pierce '77 and Chris Kelley '86 and his wife, Kelly; and grandchild Kelley Meirose '99 and her husband, Scott.

In 2007, the family donated the funds to create the University Plaza, which includes the 10 foot bronze Griffon statue and fountain, which is close to the new Kelley Commons.

"It was a great natural extension of the plaza, and we are very happy with the results," Pierce said.

The Kelley family donated \$100,000 toward the project. The Student

Government Association contributed \$20,000 for furniture for the Kelley Commons and for the first floor lobby of the Blum Union. Aramark Campus Dining contributed \$6,000 and Zack Workman '74, owner of Lawns Unlimited Inc., donated landscaping and dirt work for the new space.

"This is something my mother loves," Grahl said. "And my father would have loved sitting on the patio watching students."

The space includes a large patio area with tables and chairs, a stage, a grassy area, and large black and gold sails to provide shade. Inside the Blum Union, adjacent to the patio, is a new Java City which was provided by ARAMARK Campus Dining.

"The union is often seen as the living room on a campus, and we want Kelley Commons to be a welcoming space," said Shana Meyer, vice president for

student affairs. "We want it to be a place for students to congregate and visit with friends or work on class projects together. These spaces help build community, and that's a lot of what Missouri Western is about."

She credited Ann Pearce, special assistant to the president; and Brian Shewell, student representative on the Board of Governors; for their work on the project, along with Dr. Laurel Vartabedian, wife of Dr. Robert Vartabedian, Missouri Western's president.

Grahl laughed when she recalled the student gathering spaces that were on the new campus when she was a student in the early 1970s. The student union was a double-wide trailer. "We had nothing nice like this," she said.

She and Pierce said that their parents did not go to college, but always told their children from an early age that they were going to get a college education, and that they would start out at Missouri Western. When the bond issue for building a new campus was on the ballot, the Kelley family handed out pamphlets and knocked on doors in support of it.

"We wanted to give back. Missouri Western has provided all of us with a wonderful education and start of careers," Pierce said. "It has also done so much for the community. Under Dr. Vartabedian's leadership, Missouri Western continues to grow and excel. This is an investment into its future."

Pierce said the family's connections to Missouri Western also continue to grow – Chris and Kelly's daughter, Kealey Mathieson, is currently a student at Missouri Western.

"Our whole family loves Missouri Western," Grahl said. ■

New to the U – MWSU welcomes three

Three open positions at Missouri Western have been filled recently, including associate vice president for University Advancement, Center for Multicultural Education coordinator and Residential Life director.

Michael Armstrong was named associate vice president for University Advancement and started Jan. 7. He was previously major gift officer at the University of Central Missouri in Warrensburg.

“Missouri Western is at a pivotal and exciting point in its evolution as an institution,” Armstrong said. “The potential to expand and mature the resource development program here is incredible, and I could not resist the opportunity to be a part of making that happen.”

At Missouri Western, he will help lead the division of University Advancement, which includes Development, Alumni Relations, Public Relations and Marketing, and Campus Printing and Design Services.

As a major gift officer at UCM, Armstrong secured private support from university alumni and constituents, initiating more than 30 new scholarship and endowed funds. He also developed a comprehensive prospect management program that resulted in a 52 percent increase in gifts of more than \$10,000 in its first year of implementation.

Latoya Fitzpatrick was named coordinator for the Center for Multicultural Education at Missouri Western in January. Prior to this position, she was a housing coordinator at Oklahoma State University in Stillwater, Okla. She was a resident director at the University of Tennessee at Chattanooga before joining the Oklahoma State staff.

“This office is important because each student needs to feel like they belong,” Fitzpatrick said. “It’s important for this office to connect with students and find out what their needs are so that students can be ready for most of the challenges of the world once they leave college.”

Fitzpatrick, originally from St. Louis, earned a Bachelor of Arts in Chemistry

and a Master of Arts in Educational Administration from the University of Missouri-Kansas City.

A new Director of Residential Life also started in January: **Nathan Roberts** was serving as assistant director of Housing and Residential Life at Oklahoma State University before accepting the position at Missouri Western. He had previously served as residence area coordinator at Oklahoma State.

“As director of Residential Life you have the privilege to help shape the environment that supports college students as they pursue their dreams,” Roberts said. “I take this responsibility very seriously and I make sure to remember how I felt as a 18 year-old freshman when I’m making decisions that could greatly impact students.”

Roberts earned a Bachelor of Fine Arts in Communication from Emporia State University, Emporia, Kan., and a Master of Science in Career and Technical Education – Educational Instruction from Ferris State University in Big Rapids, Mich. ■

Centennial Notes: We’re making plans!

The Centennial Committee has been working on 2015 centennial plans since 2011. The committee is co-chaired by Alumni Relations Director Colleen Kowich and Public Relations and Marketing Director Mallory Murray.

In the coming months, the committee will be making plans for events for employees, students, alumni and the community. A large campus and community celebration in honor of Founders’ Day will be held in September 2015. The first day of classes in 1915 was Sept. 20, but the committee wants

Founders’ Day to coincide with Missouri Western’s Family Weekend.

Although plans are not final, the committee is tentatively planning a number of initiatives, such as displays on campus and throughout the community, a speaker series, commissioning of an art piece, a Black and Gold Ball and an employee rally.

In 1982, Dr. M.O. Looney, former Missouri Western president, commissioned Dr. Frances Flanagan to write the institution’s history from 1915, and that published book covered events

up to 1983. As part of the centennial, the University commissioned Diane Holtz to research and write the history from 1983. Her book will cover events through January 2015, and will come out in time for Founders’ Day in September 2015.

Mark your calendars and plan on celebrating 100 years of transforming lives. Oh, and speaking of calendars, the committee is creating centennial calendars too! ■

Student group learns through corrections

Hunter Ewart had only been on campus a few days when she accidentally wandered into Wilson Hall on her way to class in a different building (“I think I may have been texting and walking,” she admits). Ewart immediately realized she was in the wrong building but was captivated by a lecture she could hear. “He was talking about gangs,” she says of Dr. David Nicholson, “and before I knew it, students were coming out of classrooms, and I realized I had totally missed my class. But it was awesome. I loved his lecture.”

That experience convinced her to pursue a criminal justice major, and the senior from St. Joseph will graduate in December 2014 with three emphases – corrections, juvenile delinquency and administration.

Last year, when Dr. Greg Lindsteadt, associate professor of criminal justice, encouraged students to restart the American Corrections Association student group that had not

“I’ve gotten a good education here. I can apply everything I’ve learned in my future job.”

- Hunter Ewart '14

been active for several years, Ewart was on board and now serves as the group’s president. “I think I threw myself under the bus,” she said with a laugh. “But we needed unity and more collaboration among students.”

The group re-organized in the spring of 2013 and last fall, students



Members of the American Corrections Association student group help at the Missouri Division of Youth Services’ football tournament in the Griffon Indoor Sports Complex on campus.

held a campus book drive for the Riverbend Treatment Facility in St. Joseph and attended a conference. They also helped with a Missouri Division of Youth Services football tournament in the Griffon Indoor Sports Complex on campus and solicited donations and provided snack bags for the youth who played. This spring, they held a drive to collect baby items

for women in correctional facilities in Nebraska whose babies are allowed to visit. One of the group’s main activities, however, is touring correctional



Cynthia Isenbarger fills snack packs as part of the American Corrections Association student group’s service project.

Student group learns through corrections cont'd

facilities across the Midwest, which Dr. Lindsteadt says helps students compare the philosophies of the states' correctional systems and determine which is the best fit for them.

Ewart said the tours she has experienced in Missouri, Nebraska and Kansas convinced her to pursue a career in corrections.

"I've gotten a good education here," Ewart says. "I can apply everything I've learned in my future job." ■

Alumna leads youth facility: Nikki Hamre '95

When Nikki Hamre '95 was a senior, the criminal justice major planned to go to law school or the law enforcement academy until a professor of criminal justice, Jill Miller '73, told her she thought she would be good at working with kids. Turns out it was pretty good advice.



Nikki Hamre '95

As a student, Hamre, from Troy, Kan., toured Watkins Mill Park Camp School, part of the Missouri Division of Youth Services, and was hired there as a youth specialist two months after she graduated. She was named manager of the facility in 2004 after also working as group leader and assistant manager.

When Dr. Greg Lindsteadt, associate professor of criminal justice, contacted her about his students visiting the Watkins Mill facility, Hamre was happy to comply. The youth from her facility then visited Missouri Western.

"It inspires the kids to want to go to college," she said.

"Our students don't realize the impact they have on the youth," Dr. Lindsteadt added. "They can play an incredible role as mentors."

Dr. Lindsteadt noted that the Watkins Mill facility tour is an interesting experience for his students because it is different from other state correctional facilities.

The school is located by Watkins Mill State Park, so the 60 youth, both boys and girls, are able to take hikes, go rock climbing, caving or rappelling.

That appeals to Hamre, a self-proclaimed "adrenaline junkie" who didn't want a desk job. (She and her husband, Shawn '96, who played football at Missouri Western, keep a

list of the Top 10 most dangerous hikes in the United States, and they have completed four of them.)

"The youth are always doing something different," Hamre said. "We come to work and have fun with the kids, but we are teaching them skills they can use."

Additionally, she said, youth learn about fun, legal activities that give them a natural high, and the activities build trust among the youth and staff.

"A lot of kids who come here have learned not to trust," Hamre said, and the staff works to help them overcome that.

"This job has definitely taught me patience. When I started I wanted to solve the kids' problems, and I learned they have to figure it out on their own." ■

Paint it Gold

University Advancement staff distributed gift bags across campus for the Paint it Gold Spring Sports Blitz in February. Employees and students who were wearing Missouri Western black and gold received a gift bag. Nursing and Physical Therapist Assistant staff and faculty were paintin' it gold in Murphy Hall.



Vartabedians create President's Centennial Circle

With doctorate degrees in communication and long, distinguished careers in higher education, Drs. Robert and Laurel Vartabedian are dedicated to making a difference in the lives of university students. That dedication has led them to make a personal financial commitment of more than \$100,000 to Missouri Western State University. With the gift, the Vartabedians establish a new donor recognition program called the President's Centennial Circle.



100 YEARS *of* TRANSFORMING LIVES

"I really believe in this University and in this community, and Laurel and I wanted to show that in a tangible way," Dr. Vartabedian said. "As I have said many times, some universities enhance the lives of their students. I truly believe that Missouri Western transforms the lives of its students."

The Missouri Western State University Foundation is preparing for a centennial capital campaign, to be conducted in conjunction with Missouri Western's 100th anniversary celebration in 2015. The Vartabedians' gift helps jumpstart the planning efforts for that campaign, said Jerry Pickman '85, vice president for University Advancement and executive director of the Foundation.

"Donors want to know that the people seeking their financial support are themselves deeply committed to the cause," Pickman said. "This gift by the Vartabedians is a strong demonstration of that commitment."

The Vartabedians have pledged a total of \$144,000 to the future campaign. Most of the gift is undesignated at this point, but a small portion is supporting the revival of a

speech and debate team at Missouri Western (see pg. 22).

The Vartabedians' gift also inaugurates a new donor recognition program, the President's Centennial Circle, which will recognize donors with a lifetime history of giving \$100,000 or more to the University.

"As we prepare to solicit leadership gifts for this capital campaign, I cannot ask others to do something that I am not willing to do," Dr. Robert Vartabedian said. "Laurel and I want to make a difference, and Missouri Western is the culmination of our lives' work."

For more information on the President's Centennial Circle, go to missouriwestern.edu/development/presidents-centennial-circle.

Dr. Robert Vartabedian became president in July 2008. Under his leadership, Missouri Western has completed four major construction projects totaling more than \$65 million, become the summer training camp home of the Kansas City Chiefs, formed a unique entrepreneurial education partnership with Rocky Mountain Chocolate Factory, and most recently dedicated a permanent memorial to legendary journalist and St. Joseph-born Walter Cronkite.

Dr. Laurel Vartabedian is a lifelong educator. She has been a supporter of the arts at Missouri Western, including helping to found both the annual "Lights and Tights" Renaissance Feast



Drs. Robert and Laurel Vartabedian

fundraiser and the Missouri Western Arts Society. She co-wrote two musicals that have been produced in New York City. "American Story" won the Best of Festival award at the Midtown International Theatre Festival in 2000. "Mother Divine" was one of just 10 shows selected for the New York Musical Theatre Festival's Next Link Project in 2013. It will be produced in St. Joseph this summer and is being considered for future professional productions in California and Texas.

"This university and community mean a great deal to us, and we wanted to lead the charge on this once-in-a-hundred-years campaign," Dr. Laurel Vartabedian added. ■

No nursing shortage in this family

They say it all started with Helen Koch's great grandmother. In 1905, when Olive Cady enrolled at the St. Joseph Hospital for Educating Nurses in St. Joseph, Mo. as a nontraditional student, she began a legacy of nurses that continues today. And in recent history, many have earned their degrees from Missouri Western.

In December 2013, Ashley Nichols '13 earned a Bachelor of Science in Nursing, joining her mother, grandmother, brother, sister-in-law and a host of cousins in the field. Nichols' mother, Leslie Nichols '77 & '81, her grandmother, Helen Koch '84, and her aunt and uncle, Teri '80 and Bob '74 Koch, all credit Missouri Western for their education and careers.

"Nursing is a disease in our family," Helen says with a laugh. "We all just want to help people and serve."

Helen started in a nursing program right out of high school but had to quit when she got married, because married women were not allowed in the program. She always planned to go back and get her degree when her children were grown, and that is exactly what she did.

"It was her lifelong dream," Leslie says of her mother. "She was my influence."

Helen, who worked for a surgeon for several years before she earned her associate's degree in nursing, said she was often accused of brainwashing her children into going into nursing, and she doesn't deny it. "I'm very proud. I feel they have chosen a profession that will serve them well."

Bob is a certified registered nurse anesthetist at a hospital in Carthage, Mo. and Teri is the director of quality management and infection control at a hospital in Joplin, Mo. "It's been a good career," Bob said.

Teri agreed. "You learn something new every day, and you feel like you make a difference."

By the time Ashley graduated with a bachelor's degree in health science from University of Missouri-Columbia in 2011, she had already decided to pursue a nursing degree at Missouri Western.

Both her mother and grandmother are pleased with Ashley's career choice. "At first I was shocked and amazed," Leslie said. "But she will be a very caring, wonderful nurse. She has the intelligence and the heart for it."

Ashley said working one summer in a hospital convinced her that she would enjoy a nursing career. "Nursing is hands-on and you develop relationships with the patients."

All the family members agreed that their education at Missouri Western prepared them well for their careers. Helen, Bob, Teri and Leslie all received associate degrees because Missouri Western didn't begin offering bachelor's degrees in nursing until 1986.

"The professors were great," Teri said. "They were very supportive, but they had high expectations."

Ashley praised her preparation for her career, as well. "My professors were wonderful. They did a great job of finding clinical sites that supported learning."

And the legacy continues. Two of Ashley's cousins, Claire Brockett and Cole Brockett, are both currently attending Missouri Western and plan to major in nursing.

"My great grandmother is an inspiration to all of us," Helen said. ■

Nursing programs receive accreditation

The Bachelor of Science in Nursing degree program was recently re-accredited and the Master of Science in Nursing in Health Care Leadership program was initially accredited by the Commission on Collegiate Nursing Education. The bachelor degree program accreditation was extended for 10 more years, the maximum amount of time awarded by CCNE for reaccreditation.

The master's degree program received initial accreditation for a period of five years, also the maximum amount of time awarded by CCNE for initial accreditation. ■



Helen Koch '84, Ashley Nichols '13 and Leslie Nichols '77 & '81.

Basketball review

Women's

After 16 wins last season, Coach Rob Edmisson had his sights set on finishing in the upper half of a tough MIAA and knocking on the door of a return to the NCAA Tournament this season.

After a promising 4-0 start, it appeared the team was on their way to just that, but injuries and some hard-luck shooting nights left the Griffons on the outside looking in at tournament time. Highlight victories during the season came in front of the two biggest crowds of the season in the fieldhouse, one on Jan. 18, 73-63 over Southwest Baptist in front of 1,700 fans, and a 68-47 win over rival Northwest Missouri State with more than 2,000 fans in attendance.

While the women struggled on the offensive end, the defense was tops in the MIAA in holding opponents to just 59 points per game. In a victory against Lincoln on Jan. 29, the Griffons held the Blue Tigers to just 28 points, which was the third lowest mark in school history.

Two players were honored for their efforts on the court: Forward Quenisha Lockett was named Honorable Mention All-MIAA and forward Tiffanie Abrams was named to the All-Defensive Team.

Men's

For the first time in 25 years, men's basketball saw a new face on the sidelines as Head Coach Brett Weiberg succeeded legendary Coach Tom Smith this past season.

Weiberg hit the ground running, winning six of his first nine games, including wins over perennial Division II powers Augustana in his first game and Fort Hays State in early December.



JaQuitta Dever

Some near misses early in league play and a late season tailspin sent the Griffons to the 12th and final spot in the MIAA Postseason Basketball Tournament.

One constant in the Griffon lineup this season was junior guard Ryan Devers, who finished eighth in the MIAA in scoring, averaging 17 points a game. He scored in double figures in all but two games, including a season-high 40 points against Southwest Baptist on March 1. It was the first time a Griffon had scored more than 40 in a game since December 1995 when Jerran Cobb did so against California-Riverside. For his efforts, Devers was named Honorable Mention All-MIAA.

With only two seniors, a good nucleus returning and a strong recruiting class, 2014-15 has great potential. ■

Griffon softball

Coming off a 38-win season, softball was picked to finish second out of 15 teams in the MIAA Preseason Coaches Poll heading into this season. At press time, six weeks of the season, the Griffons currently stood at 14-10 overall.

Offensively the team is led by a nice mix of veteran leadership and freshman phenoms. Junior first baseman Tiffany Gillaspay is off to a hot start, hitting .373 with five home runs and 13 RBIs. Junior outfielder Bre Fleshcner is also having another solid season at the plate in the early going with a .306 batting average.

Freshman outfielders Morgan Rathmann and Kailey Green are second and third on the team in batting average, hitting .333 and .314 respectively. In the pitching circle, strikeout and all-time wins leader, and three-time first team All-MIAA pitcher Jackie Bishop returns for her senior season. Bishop currently has a 9-4 overall record with a 1.18 ERA, including throwing three no-hitters.

The Griffons have their sights set on qualifying for their seventh NCAA Tournament appearance in 10 seasons. The softball coach is Jen Trotter. ■



Download the Griffon Athletics mobile app for iPhones and Android devices. The Go Griffons free mobile app is available for download in the iTunes store, Google Play, the Amazon Marketplace; or users may text "Griffons" to 46988 for a link to download as well. For information on all Missouri Western Athletics, check out gogriffons.com.

Cortez Colbert



Golfers on the greens

It's been a whirlwind seven months for new golf coach Greg Dillon. On the women's side after six events, the best team finish was a third place showing in the Northwest Missouri State Fall Invitational. Individually, sophomore Callie Wilson and freshman Madison Romjue led the team with an 84 scoring average.

On the men's side, the best team finish came in the season opening event in the Missouri Intercollegiate Championship, where the Griffons finished sixth of out 15 teams. Junior Scott Sheldon leads the team in scoring with an average of 77 per round. ■

Celebrity Golf Classic
June 16, 2014
St. Joseph Country Club
Call (816) 271-5926 or email
lau@missouriwestern.edu
for details.

Sports Notes

Garnett '06 on the PGA Tour

Brice Garnett '06, originally from Gallatin, Mo., earned his PGA Tour card last fall and is making the most of status. Through 10 events on tour, he has made nine cuts, with his best finish being tied for 19th at the AT&T National Pro Am at Pebble Beach Golf Links in February 2014. Garnett is currently 120th in the FedEx Cup Standings and 135th on the money list with earnings of almost \$190,000.

Recently, Garnett was one of 10 named to the MIAA Hall of Fame Class of 2014.

Join the Gold Coat Victory Fund

Support Griffon Athletics by joining the official booster club the Gold Coat Victory Fund. The Fund helps provide needed funding to keep our programs among the most competitive in NCAA Division II. By joining the Gold Coat Victory Fund, you'll also have access to season tickets to Griffon sports, preferred parking opportunities, access to improved club areas at football and basketball, football sideline passes, fitness center access, social invites and much more. Our annual membership drive is underway now. Join online at

Baseball builds on record season

Coming off the best season in school history in 2013, the University's first MIAA Championship and a berth in the NCAA Tournament, the baseball team had high expectations entering the 2014 season. They were picked to finish second out of 15 MIAA teams.

Only returning one regular starter in the lineup and no returning starting pitchers, Coach Buzz Verduzco knew that getting new faces acclimated to a tough MIAA schedule would be a challenge.

gogriffons.com or for more information call David Lau at (816) 271-5926 or e-mail lau@missouriwestern.edu.

Tight end to NFL Combine

Tight end Reggie Jordan received an invitation to the NFL Combine in Indianapolis in February 2014. Jordan was a top aerial target for the Griffons throughout his career and earned D2Football.com Honorable Mention All-America Honors in the 2013 season.

Griffon alum leads Kansas State women's basketball

Former women's basketball coach and Missouri Western Athletics Hall of Fame member Jeff Mittie '89 was named head women's basketball coach at Kansas State University in Manhattan. Mittie, who played both basketball and baseball at Missouri Western, coached women's basketball 1992-95 and compiled a 76-17 career record. He led the women to the Elite Eight twice, including a Final Four appearance in 1995. He spent four seasons at Arkansas State University and the last 15 years at Texas Christian University in Fort Worth. ■

Through 20 games, the Griffons sat at 9-11 overall. Four players are hitting over .300: Ryan Degner, .368; Trevor LaHonta, .349; David Chew, .338; and Will Carter, .314.

The new pitching staff has had its ups and downs. It is led by Dylan Roades, who has a 2.16 ERA in four appearances and junior Tyler Sanders with a 3.46 ERA in 11 appearances.

The team is gearing up for the MIAA Baseball Championship held May 8-10 in Springfield, Mo. ■



Real success in University's synthetic biology research

If you go online and Google “bacterial computing,” four out of the first five entries that appear are papers that have been published by Missouri Western professors and students. Since 2006, Dr. Todd Eckdahl, Dr. Jeff Poet and eight teams totaling 19 mathematics and 35 biology Missouri Western undergraduate students have been conducting synthetic biology research, which uses mathematical modeling and molecular biology methods to design and construct new biological parts, devices and systems. They have achieved phenomenal success by every measure.

It all started in 2005, when Dr. Todd Eckdahl, professor of biology and department chair, was asked to observe and help judge a collegiate competition sponsored by the Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT). He didn't want to at first, but his friend and colleague, Dr. Malcolm Campbell from Davidson College in North Carolina, insisted, so Dr. Eckdahl went.

The iGEM (International Genetically Engineered Machine) competition, an undergraduate

competition for synthetic biology research, was just two years old that year, and 13 teams from colleges and universities across the globe were competing, including Davidson. Dr. Eckdahl was not familiar with synthetic biology, which was a new field.

After he returned from MIT, Dr. Eckdahl was excited about the research

biologist, and Dr. Laurie Heyer, a mathematician from Davidson, to gather students from each institution to conduct synthetic biology research over the summer. And by November 2006, Missouri Western and Davidson each took a team to the third annual iGEM competition, which now consisted of 32 teams. After the first competition, the

two schools joined as one team and competed at iGEM together for the next four years.

Dr. Poet related that, in the spring of 2006, he and Dr. Eckdahl signed up to attend a workshop at MIT for professors interested in conducting synthetic biology research with their students and competing at iGEM. Dr. Poet remembers one of the slides shown during a session

was an engineering-like blueprint of a genetic system and very complicated.

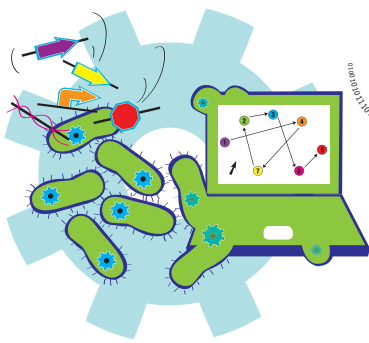
“I looked at that and thought, ‘What did we get ourselves into?’” Dr. Poet said. “But by the end of the summer, we took a photo of a chalkboard in the lab full of our research, and it was every bit as complicated as the one at our training.



Dr. Jeff Poet shows students Kelly Cochran and Erica Keffeler software used in the University's synthetic biology research program.

and wanted to take students to the next year's iGEM. However, he realized synthetic biology was bigger than just biology, so he met with Dr. Poet, professor of mathematics, who agreed to join in on the research.

Dr. Poet and Dr. Eckdahl collaborated with Dr. Campbell, a



And, every one of our students could explain it in detail.”

To say Missouri Western’s synthetic biology research program has had success is an understatement. Not only did the 2006 team bring home an award for Best Oral Presentation, but each team for the next four years brought home a Gold Medal for the quality of oral, poster and website presentation of research results. Dr. Eckdahl noted that only about one-third of the 129 teams competing in 2010, the last year Missouri Western competed, earned a gold medal.

And if a program is judged by the number of published articles or the amount of research grants, well, Dr. Eckdahl and Dr. Poet’s program again measures up.

Since 2007, the synthetic biology program has earned more than \$2 million in grants from the National Science Foundation. Just last fall, Missouri Western and Davidson split a research grant of more than \$1 million for synthetic biology research over the next three years.

And published articles? The Missouri Western/Davidson iGEM team is credited with being

among those constructing the first bacterial computers, and has received worldwide media attention for this accomplishment, including mention in *Scientific American* and an interview on National Public Radio’s Science Friday program.

The 2006 iGEM team’s research paper, “Engineering Bacteria to Solve

And what, you ask, is the most accessed paper in JBE history? The published paper from the 2007 Missouri Western/Davidson iGEM team, “Solving a Hamiltonian Path Problem with a Bacterial Computer.” That one, too, earned Outstanding Paper of the Year, and has been accessed more than 54,000 times.

In all, the researchers have published a total of 11 papers involving 85 undergraduate co-authors, 44 of whom were from Missouri Western.

“We had a lot of success the first year, and I thought, ‘this is as good as it gets,’” Dr. Eckdahl said. “But then we started getting NSF grants.”

“Every year, we say, ‘this is the best team yet,’” Dr. Poet



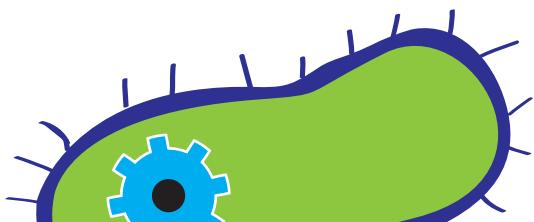
Brandon Grieshaber and Dr. Todd Eckdahl are part of the synthetic biology team at Missouri Western.

the Burnt Pancake Problem” that was published in the *Journal of Biological Engineering* was picked up by newspapers and online sites around the world. The paper earned Outstanding Paper of the Year from the JBE and stands as the second most accessed paper in its history, with more than 47,000 accesses to date.

added. “And we mean it.”

The professors have taken their research success to the next level, as they also conduct workshops to “teach the teachers.” For the past four summers, Dr. Eckdahl, Dr. Poet, Dr. Campbell and Dr. Heyer have taught a synthetic biology workshop for professors across the country who want to engage

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“One of the things that bothered me the most was the lack of respect.”

“It took a lot of people dying to give you the opportunities you have today.”

“Always give back to your community. And remember your roots.”

“You could work at a restaurant, but you couldn’t eat there.”

“Only one (movie theater) let us in, and we had to sit in the balcony. That was in St. Joe.”

In their own words

“I wanted their memories to live on.” Those seven words sum up the feelings of Alonzo Weston and his longtime dream that was fulfilled with the help of a Missouri Western professor, a graduate student and an alumna.

Last summer, Weston, a reporter for the St. Joseph News-Press, wrote a column about trying to capture members of the African American community on video for the Black Archives Museum. He had been working on it for several years, and just not finding the time to get as many interviews as he wanted.

“Some of our youth don’t realize the struggles of their ancestors,” Weston said of why he was involved in the project. “They don’t realize the sacrifices they made.”

Dr. Bill Church, assistant professor of English, saw Weston’s column and told

the columnist that he could help move the project along. “I was really interested in black oral history,” Dr. Church said. “To hear their stories was very touching. Everyone added something that no one had said before.”

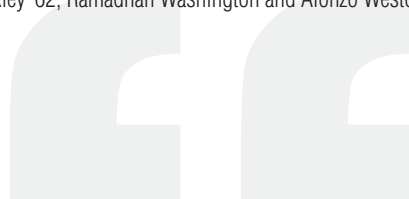
Enter Jeremy Lyons, a student in Missouri Western’s digital media graduate program. Lyons offered to interview the community members over the summer of 2013 as part of his master’s thesis. He interviewed 14 people, many in their homes, and produced “In Their Own Words,” a 35-minute film for the Black Archives Museum.

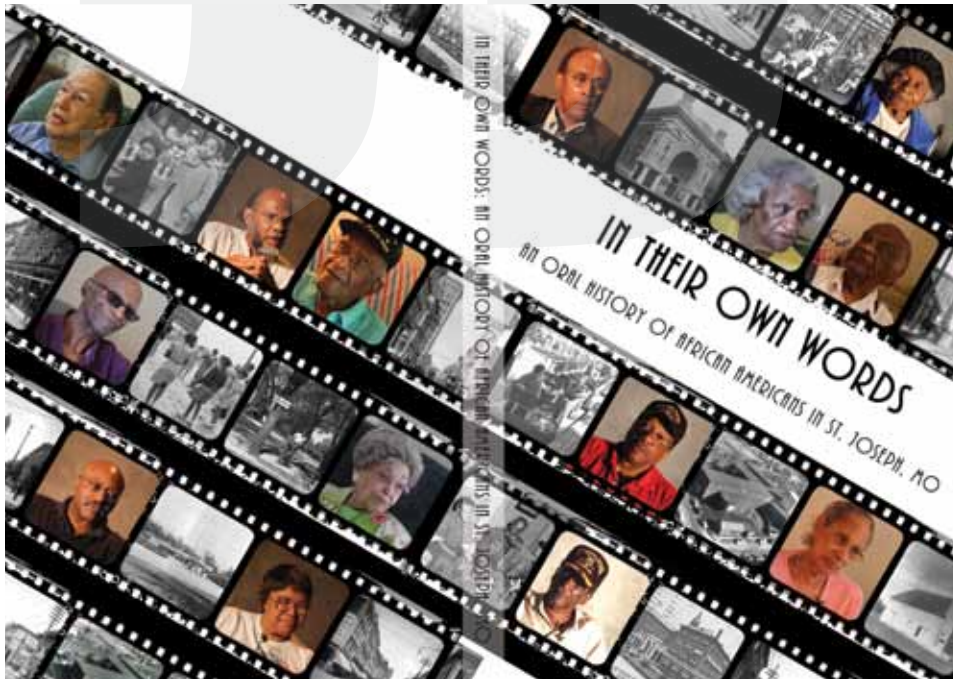
“It was very intriguing and interesting,” Lyons says of his interviews. “It’s striking to hear about their lives firsthand. I loved hearing their stories.”

The project was part of his master’s thesis, along with the creation of a



Graduate student Jeremy Lyons, left, and Dr. Bill Church, far right, are pictured with some of the members of St. Joseph’s African American community who were video interviewed as part of the “In Their Own Words” project: from left, Moses Hicks, Leo Blakley ‘62, Ramadhan Washington and Alonzo Weston.





website for the museum so visitors can access the more than nine hours of complete interviews of everyone, an online interactive timeline of black history and a research paper on segregation and integration.

Lyons' film was unveiled during February, Black History Month, and has received positive reviews.

A book that contains a transcription of every interview will be for sale at the museum soon. Ashley Snyder '13, transcribed most of the interviews for the book.

"It was a great project," she said. "The people all had interesting stories. They explained it in such a way that it took you back to the time."

Those who were interviewed talk about how blacks were treated before the Civil Rights Act and before schools were integrated. They shared stories about their lives and their careers. (See some of the quotations from the film around the border.)

Virginia Glass, 94, was one of the first black students to enroll in the St. Joseph Junior College after the

Supreme Court decision of *Brown vs. Board of Education*, which ended segregated schools. She talked about her career as a teacher. "I really didn't want to be interviewed, but because of Alonzo (Weston), I consented. It was a good experience."

At age 58, Weston was the youngest one interviewed and 100 year-old Frances Washington was the oldest. She passed away shortly after her interview. Weston says he wished he could have interviewed several who have passed away, including St. Joseph's first black firefighter, and Kelsey Beshears, for whom Beshears Hall on campus is named. She was his neighbor and a large figure in the NAACP.

Weston is pleased with the project and plans to continue interviewing more in the community.

"When I was a kid, we'd sit around and my relatives would tell stories, and I enjoyed them. As I got older, I realized how important the stories were," he said. "A lot of kids out there don't have someone to tell them a story, and I wanted the youth to hear it in their own words." ■

"We didn't have a lot of the luxuries of the other schools in St. Joe, but we had excellent teachers."

"We could go to Krug Park but we couldn't use the swings or sliding boards."

"We had a lot of segregation in St. Joe."

"I had to take the bus to the Junior College and they wanted me to sit in the back. I paid the same amount as they did. I wasn't going to the back of the bus."

"The hanging wasn't talked about because nobody wanted to talk about it."



International students enrich

Last fall, the annual International Fair at Missouri Western drew more than 400 participants and a Kuwaiti student's presentation was standing-room-only. The University is embracing its internationalization, and Amy Kotwani, International Student Services director, couldn't be more pleased.

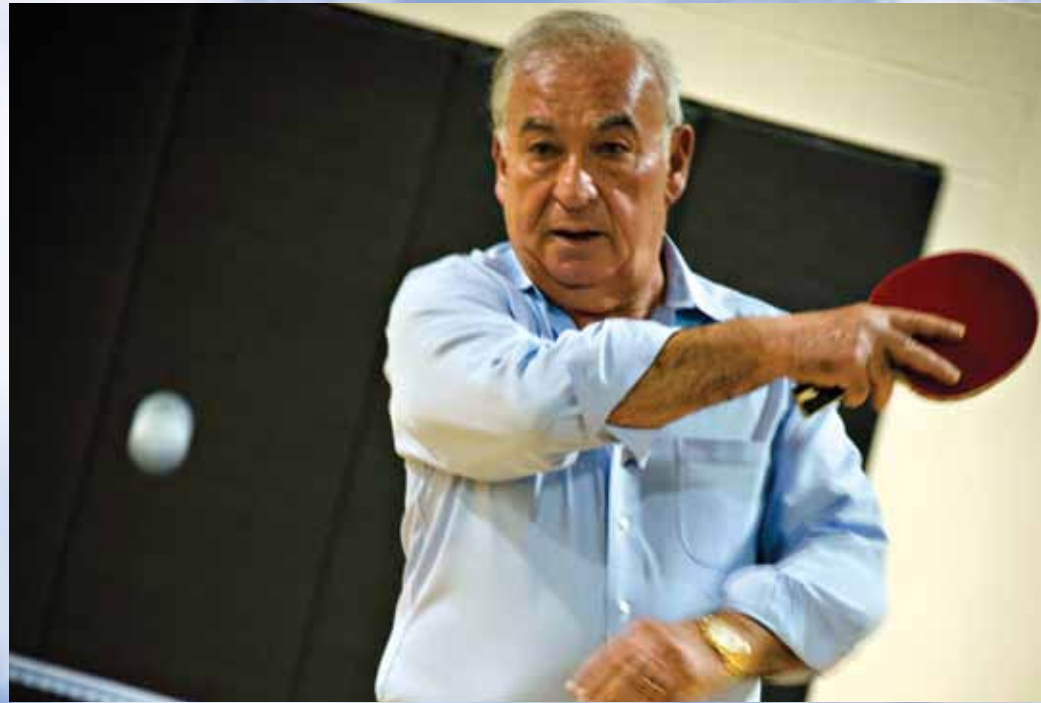
The initiative to enroll more international students is paying off, she says. Since she took on the director's role in August 2012, international student recruitment efforts have increased, including a larger web

presence and more recruiting trips abroad. Additionally,

an international strategic enrollment management committee has been formed, which will handle exchange

agreements with foreign universities and the University's processes for international students.

"When people talk about increasing international student numbers, a key piece is also



Dr. Krikor Partamian plays in the championship round of a ping pong tournament held on campus this past spring. The tournament, which was named in Dr. Partamian's honor, included 51 participants and raised \$4,000 for International Student Services. Brian Hopkins '87, was the winner of the double elimination tournament.

making sure that when the students are here they have a good experience," Kotwani said. "We want them to go back home and look back and feel good about Missouri Western."

She said the international students have a lot of choices regarding which university to attend, so it's important that Missouri Western not only has all the information easily accessible when they are making their decision, but that the University has a support system in place once they arrive.

"A lot of them have never been to the United States, and a lot may have never left their country. We want to make sure we provide as much information as possible so they can make the most of their time here."

This spring semester, there are 87 international students from more than 25 countries. Additionally, eight students from Brazil are studying in the Intensive

English Program for six months as part of a Brazilian initiative. There are also two Fulbright scholars teaching German and Spanish.

A 2012 exchange agreement with Xidian University in China brought a



Javier Paz





campus community

professor from there for the 2012-13 academic year and again this year to teach Chinese. Dr. Kay Siebler, professor of English, is currently teaching English at Xidian for 2013-14. Additionally, there are two exchange students at Missouri Western from Xidian, and a scholar from there is conducting research here for six months.

“International students bring different perspectives,” Kotwani said. “It’s interesting to hear how they grew up and how that affects their experience in college. You can read a textbook about a foreign country, but it’s not the same as talking to someone from there.” ■

Javier Paz



Javier Alejandro Paz Blanco was at the right place at the right time, and he seized the opportunity to study abroad at Missouri Western.

The junior from La Esperanza, Honduras, said a requirement for high schools in his country is serving the community, so his class was regularly volunteering at a drug and alcohol rehabilitation center.

One day, Dr. Jimmy Albright from St. Joseph, Mo. visited the rehabilitation center on a mission trip and visited with the students from Paz’s high school who were volunteering there. He also spoke at their high school about his archeology work.

When Dr. Albright returned to St. Joseph, he decided to set up a scholarship to Missouri Western for two students from that high school, using his own funds and help from several community businesses. Paz and Edgardo Jamil Valasquez Mejia are now part of the growing international student population at Missouri Western.

“Here are two guys from a third-world country with a real need,” Dr.

Albright said. “They are very focused on their studies. They will go far in life.”

“I’ve loved every second here,” says Paz, who was a resident assistant last year. “I love living in the residence hall and meeting everyone in the building.”

The manufacturing engineering technology major said he had wanted to study abroad for college since he was in seventh grade.

“My mom told me I would have to work hard and get good grades so I could get scholarships,” he said. “I kept dreaming, I worked hard, and I met the right people.”

His high school’s vice principal had attended college in the United States, so he was a great help to Paz as he prepared to study abroad.

Paz said he had traveled around Central America with a dance team when he was in high school, but had never been to the United States. He owes his impeccable command of the language to starting to learn English in kindergarten.

“The language was my biggest fear

before I came,” he says. “But I realized I had nothing to fear. My friends say my English is better than some Americans.”

He said he plans to pursue a master’s in genetic engineering after graduation and eventually return to Honduras. “I hope I get the opportunity where I have enough money to help my country.”

And most importantly, he is grateful to Dr. Albright for giving him this opportunity.

“He’s the best thing that happened to us,” Paz says.

As for Dr. Albright, he has continued to raise funds for the two students’ expenses and to be involved in their lives. “We had a real conviction to help these guys,” Dr. Albright said. “We knew we could change their lives forever.” ■

Gilbert Imbiri



Gilbert Imbiri came to the United States, left, came back, left, and returned yet again. And this time, he says, he is staying for good.

Continued on next page



Jee Hye and Gilbert Imbiri provided musical entertainment for a group of Missouri Western alumni and friends in Scottsdale, Ariz. this past winter.



International students enrich campus community

Continued from pg. 19

The senior from Jayapura, Indonesia (on the island of Papua) first came to the United States as a sophomore foreign exchange student at DeKalb High School in DeKalb, Mo. in 2004. He spoke very little English and wasn't quite 5 ft. tall.

When he landed at the Kansas City International Airport, he wasn't sure how he was supposed to get to DeKalb, so, using plenty of hand motions, he asked a stewardess for help.

"I was so small, she told me to wait and she would help me," he says. "I walked out with the pilot and the stewardess, the last one off the plane. And there was my American family, holding a sign that read, 'Welcome to the United States, Gilbert!' I said, 'That's me!'" But they were frantic because they had been waiting so long for me to come off the plane."

After the school year at DeKalb, he went back home to Indonesia with a plan of returning to the U.S. He spent his junior year of high school in his native country, and returned his senior year back in the U.S., attending Maur Hill Academy in Atchison, Kan. He lived with the same family that he had stayed with his sophomore year. "My American mom calls me a bad penny, because I keep returning," Imbiri says with a laugh.

Then it was back to Indonesia. This time, it took 18 months to get the visa



Sharon Rodriguez Benarroch

he needed to attend college in the U.S. Imbiri supported himself by singing in a Christian band, traveling all over southeastern Asia.

He came to Missouri Western in the fall of 2010 and has loved his experience here. "The professors put a lot of effort into helping me."

The convergent media major will graduate in December 2014, and is getting married in May 2014. His fiancée, also a Missouri Western student, is from Nebraska, and Imbiri says they plan to live in the U.S.

"Papua and my family will always be in my heart. But I feel like this is home." ■

Sharon Rodriguez Benarroch



When someone asks where she is from, Sharon Rodriguez Benarroch

usually has to explain where her country is located. She is from Andorra, one of

the smallest nations in Europe, which has a population of about 85,000.

"Usually people get it wrong and they think I am from Honduras. I guess it pretty much sounds the same in English," Benarroch says. "But Honduras is in Central America, it is warm and on the beach, whereas Andorra is in Europe (bordering Spain and France in southwestern Europe), it is way snowy and it is in the mountains. I usually have to explain where it is, even to European students."

Because the country of Andorra has no universities, Benarroch was attending Université d'Angers in Angers, France and looking for a study abroad opportunity. Missouri Western has an exchange agreement with that university, so Benarroch came here as an exchange student for the 2012-13 school year.

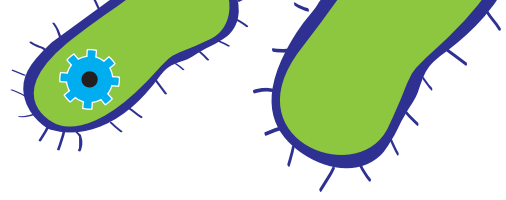
She arrived after the semester had already started, and said she received a lot of help figuring out where things were from Admissions, International Student Services, other international students and her roommate in Vaselakos Hall.

Benarroch decided she wanted to return as an international student to pursue a Bachelor of Science in Business Administration from Missouri Western. She plans to complete that in May 2105 and stay in the U.S. to earn an MBA.

"I like the teaching here," Benarroch said. "There is more explaining and less memorizing. In France, they want you to memorize it even if you don't understand it. Here we also get to interact, discuss and participate."

One thing that surprised her is the casual relationship between supervisors and employees, which is very different from the culture in Europe. Benarroch works in an office on campus.

"I really like it here," Benarroch says. "I like the way the teachers get to know you and you get to know them." ■



Real success in University's synthetic biology research

Continued from pg. 15

their students in this research. The workshops were held the first year at Davidson, the second at Missouri Western, and the next two at the Howard Hughes Medical Institute – Janelia Farm Research Campus in Virginia. This summer, they will again hold a workshop, at the University of Maryland-Baltimore.

Three years ago, Dr. Catherine Kendig, assistant professor of philosophy at Missouri Western, joined the team to help the faculty participants learn how to engage their students in discussion of the philosophy and ethics of synthetic biology.

“NSF is very interested in philosophical and ethical questions surrounding synthetic biology,” Dr. Eckdahl said. “When new technology comes along, people say, ‘we can do this, but should we?’”

After the 2010 iGEM, Dr. Eckdahl and Dr. Poet decided to discontinue entering the competition. “By November (the month of iGEM), the teams always had more questions than answers, but every year, the new group coming in wanted a new project,” Dr. Poet said.

The 2013 research grant will fund the same research project for three years, instead of a new one every year, as was done for iGEM. Students and professors will work with their Davidson colleagues to develop a system to control bacterial metabolism.

“It’s not just about getting bacteria to produce a given useful chemical or pharmaceutical,” Dr. Eckdahl said, “but more about developing a system

of getting bacteria to do so. If our idea works, we can publish a paper and others can use our system for their own purposes.”

He noted that the system could have applications in fields such as energy, the environment, pharmaceuticals, food production and more.

The three-year grant will provide 18 undergraduate students from Missouri Western and 18 from Davidson with full-time research jobs for 10 weeks each summer and support for the faculty researchers. It will also fund two trips each summer for the researchers – the Missouri Western team will travel to Davidson for one week and the Davidson team will travel to Missouri Western for a week. The grant also pays for research supplies and equipment, and travel to professional conferences for faculty and students.

“The grant application succeeded because we have a track record of collaborating across disciplines and across institutions to provide valuable educational experiences for students while they conduct cutting-edge synthetic biology research,” Dr. Eckdahl said.

“These students get the experience of not only answering questions that have not been addressed before, they get to ask questions that have never been asked,” Dr. Poet said. “They get to establish the direction of their curiosity.”

Dr. Eckdahl and Dr. Poet agree that the experience students gain in research is invaluable to their college education and their future careers. “It is really all about applied learning,” Dr. Eckdahl said. “They learn math or genetics in class, and then jump in with us to find a way to use it.” ■

PORTAL to experience

The synthetic biology research conducted by Dr. Todd Eckdahl, professor of biology, Dr. Jeff Poet, professor of mathematics, and their students is just one example of students across campus who are conducting research and initiating creative projects with faculty members.

The first student-faculty research program was the Undergraduate Summer Research Institute (URSI), which began in 1991. Then, in 2002, a Summer Research Institute (SRI) began, which included high school students doing research along with a faculty member and Missouri Western students.

Both programs successfully offered students numerous research opportunities with faculty for many years before becoming incorporated into PORTAL, which began in 2012. Missouri Western’s PORTAL, the Program of Research, Teaching, and Applied Learning, serves as an umbrella for all summer applied learning activities, including internships, practica, study away, and creative projects, along with the faculty/student research.

A symposium where students present their research results to the campus and community has always been part of the URSI and SRI, and is now a part of PORTAL.

The Missouri Western State University Foundation helps fund PORTAL by providing support for faculty members and students in several areas. ■

Debate and forensics returns to Missouri Western

"It is better to debate a question without settling it than to settle a question without debating it." Joseph Joubert (1754-1824)

Here is a question for alumni from the 1970s, '80s or '90s: What campus organization traveled all over the United States and made a name for Missouri Western because of its achievements?

If you answered the Forensic Society, you are correct! After an absence of more than a decade, a forensic program, along with parliamentary debate, returned to campus in the fall of 2013.

As a former college debate participant and debate coach, he used the funds to create a parliamentary debate and forensic program, and Sohail Jouya and Abigayle Richardson were hired as coaches, Jouya for debate and Richardson for forensics. The program began with seven students.

Freshmen Haden McDonald and Brad Stanton, who were debate partners at Savannah (Mo.) High School, said that once they decided to go to Missouri Western, they had talked to each other about trying to start a debate team here.

Parliamentary Debate Novice Division. Dodge is one of only two Missouri Western team members who were not on debate or forensics teams in high school.

At the Missouri Association of Forensics Activities state tournament, the team of Deckard and Dodge finished second and McDonald and Stanton finished third out of 15 teams.

"Debate is one of the best extra-curricular activities for giving you real-life skills," said Stanton, whose career plans include being a lawyer and perhaps a politician. "Public speaking, logic and thinking on your feet are 100 percent applicable to the real world, and are all skills you can gain from debate and forensics."

In parliamentary debate tournaments, the competitors learn their topic only 15 minutes before their debate begins. The twice-a-week practices for the team involve research, talking about a number of different current events and analyzing arguments, said Jouya, who also coaches debate at Lincoln College Preparatory Academy in Kansas City, Mo. "These students come away from the program with a huge handle on current events. You can't help but learn from it."

Richardson participated in forensics as a freshman at Truman State University in Kirksville and all four years as a student at Savannah High School. As a high schooler, she qualified for the national tournament four times. Richardson also attended three summer forensic camps at Bradley University. "I got to study under the best of the best," she says of the summer camps. "And I love coaching the students."



Sohail Jouya works with parliamentary debate students two times a week during the debate season.

The impetus for the program's return came about in December 2012, when the Board of Governors renewed Dr. Robert Vartabedian's presidential contract for five years and gave him a salary increase. Instead of taking the increase, Dr. Vartabedian said he wanted to use the net salary increase to fund special programs or projects over the next three years.

They were excited when they realized Dr. Vartabedian had the same idea.

At their first debate tournament last October, Stanton placed third and McDonald fourth in the Novice Division for individual speakers. Additionally, the freshmen team of Graham Deckard and Eli Dodge brought home first place in the



She noted that several universities want to see Missouri Western's program succeed and have offered help to the two coaches.

"This program acts as the academic and intellectual face of the University, and we enjoy that," Jouya said.

Stanton agreed. "I want to debate here to make a name for Missouri Western on the debate circuit."

Jouya lived in St. Joseph for three years as a youth and said he spent a lot of time on campus, and Richardson attended cheer camps on campus as a young girl. After he was hired, Jouya found out his mother had participated in Missouri Western's forensic program as a student.

Future plans for the program include offering scholarships and hosting a high school tournament on campus.

"We like starting from the ground up and we're happy to be here," Jouya said. "It's nice to be back on campus and be leaders." ■

Top, Brad Stanton and his debate partner, Haden McDonald, give a demonstration of parliamentary debate on campus; right, Kasey Maag and Abigail Richardson prepare Maag's forensic speech.

Alumnus serves as national association president

Don Crabtree '71 was happy to see Missouri Western re-launch its competitive speech and debate program last fall, and if anybody knows about speech and debate programs, it's him.

In September 2012, Crabtree was elected as president of the Board of Directors of the National Forensic League for a two-year term. He had previously served as vice president of the board for 12 years and as a board member since 1988. He has coached the forensic program at Park Hill High School in Kansas City, Mo. for 38 years.

"The program will be a great benefit for Missouri Western," Crabtree said. He noted that students often ask him about Missouri Western, and their second or third question is whether the University has a competitive forensic program.

The National Forensic League represents more than a million members and 5,000 schools in the U.S., Korea and China. It began in 1925 and serves as a national honor society for secondary and middle school speech and debate. As the national president, Crabtree travels to tournaments

across the country and leads the board meetings.

A League Hall of Fame member, Crabtree began teaching and coaching at Bishop LeBlond High School in St. Joseph, Mo. after he graduated with degrees in speech and theatre, and English from Missouri Western.

"I knew I wanted to teach speech," he said. "I got involved in the program by default and I fell in love with it immediately."

Five years later, he began his stint at Park Hill. The long-time coach officially retired in 2006 but still helps with Park Hill's program on a part-time basis.

Crabtree has earned a number of awards over the years, including 15 Distinguished Service plaques, the Ralph Carey Distinguished Career Service Award, the Missouri State High School Activities Association Award for Distinguished Service, and the National Federation Award for Career Service. He has been named the Park Hill School District Teacher of the Year and the Missouri Speech Teacher of the Year.

Continued on next page



Alumnus serves as national association president

Continued from pg. 23

Although he had been involved with the local and state forensic organizations for several years, he got interested in volunteering at the national level when Park Hill hosted the national forensic tournament in 1983. "I was already involved, but I wanted to do more to help more kids."

Crabtree calls the nationals the world's largest academic tournament, where more than 7,000 students from all 50 states, China, S. Korea, Puerto Rico and Guam compete for five days. Park Hill again hosted the nationals in 1994 and 2010, and the 2014 nationals will be held in Overland Park, Kan.

Coincidentally, Missouri Western's parliamentary debate coach, Sohail Jouya, was a student of Crabtree's at Park Hill. And, Crabtree said the Park Hill program works closely with the Savannah High School program, so he knew Missouri Western forensic coach Abigail Richardson, who competed for Savannah when she was in high school. He also knows several of the students currently on Missouri Western's team.

"I have talked to them extensively, given them materials, and given them advice when they asked for it," Crabtree said of the two Missouri Western coaches.

And now, when a Park Hill student asks him if Missouri Western has a forensic and debate program, he is proud to be able to answer in the affirmative. ■

In memory of Anne Reed Gray

The St. Joseph community lost an outstanding citizen when Anne Reed Gray passed away Jan. 13, 2014. She will be fondly remembered by many organizations in the community as an active volunteer and an advocate for many important causes. Her family established an endowed scholarship fund for Missouri Western students in her memory.

The scholarship is for students in music, art and theatre.

"The arts were mom's passion and her background," said her son, Pete Gray, CEO and President of Gray Manufacturing.

Gray said she earned more than 42 credit hours from Missouri Western, which were mostly in painting classes. She also took art lessons from local artists and won many awards in local art shows. In 1995, she helped Al Kost '32 paint the mural in the St. Joseph Junior College Room in the Blum Union.

"She loved painting in oils, and some are hanging in our building (Gray Manufacturing) today," said her husband, Joe Gray '42.

Starting an endowed scholarship in her memory is fitting, because she and her husband helped many Missouri Western students with college expenses over the years.

Pete Gray said they wanted to establish a scholarship for his mother, but the employees at Gray Manufacturing suggested it be an endowed scholarship. The family, Gray Manufacturing employees, friends and community members have all contributed to the scholarship fund.

Joe and Anne have always been supportive of Missouri Western. In fact, the initial meeting to talk about fundraising for the Glenn E. Marion Memorial Clock Tower now on campus was held in their home.

Anne Gray volunteered for the League of Women Voters, Cathedral School PTA council, Audubon Society, First Presbyterian Church, Meals on Wheels and at the food kitchen.

"She was a believer in being publicly active in the things she supported," Joe said. "And if she believed in something, she put her whole heart and soul in it."

Pete said as active and involved as she was in the community, Anne was a great mother to her eight children. "In our neighborhood, our

house was the place to be," Pete said. "When we sat down to eat, we always had neighbor kids eating with us."

"She also had a lot of little traditions with the holidays that I continue with my kids today," he added.

Anne grew up in Philadelphia. She met Joe when he was in the Navy and she was dating his friend. The friend set Joe up on a double date with Anne and him, and it didn't quite work out as the friend intended.

Joe and Anne married in 1947 and moved back to St. Joseph in 1952 to co-found Gray Manufacturing with Joe's father, Joseph Herman Gray.

She and Joe were married 66 years when she died. She is survived by eight children, 10 grandchildren and five great-grandchildren.

To contribute to the Anne Reed Gray Memorial Arts Scholarship, contact the Missouri Western State University Foundation at (816) 271-5647. ■



Anne Reed Gray
July 28, 1927-Jan. 13, 2014

Arts advocate supports Missouri Western

Bill Wright left St. Joseph when he went away to college in 1957 and lost track of what was happening in his hometown. Although he came back for visits over the years, he hadn't even realized that the St. Joseph Junior College had transformed into Missouri Western State University over the approximately 50 years he was gone.

"I had never been on campus," he says of Missouri Western. "I didn't even know it was there."

When Wright retired and moved back to St. Joseph, he realized that a real community gem existed just east of I-29. One of the first people he met was Dr. Laurel Vartabedian, wife of Missouri Western's president, Dr. Robert Vartabedian. "That's how I found out about the University," he says. "I was incredibly surprised that it was here."

Through his friendship with Dr. Laurel Vartabedian, he developed an appreciation for the University's arts programs. Wright recently gave the Missouri Western State University Foundation \$50,000 to establish an endowed scholarship fund to be used for scholarships for Missouri Western

students in the arts – music, art and theatre. He also notified the Foundation that it is a beneficiary in his estate plan of almost \$500,000 for the scholarship fund.



Bill Wright

"I was impressed by everyone I met in the arts programs. There is incredible potential for the arts at Missouri Western," Wright said. "Faculty members are excellent and incredibly talented; they are world class people."

With Dr. Laurel Vartabedian and Karen Graves, Wright helped found the Missouri Western Arts Society in 2011 to help support the arts programs. He currently heads its council. Additionally, he has helped fund student trips to the Kansas City Lyric Opera and the Kansas City Repertory Theater.

Wright graduated from the University of Kansas and began his career as an architect for a large firm in Houston, traveling all over the world managing projects. He then worked for University of Houston and later Rutgers University, managing their building projects.

From there he developed and operated the New Brunswick Cultural Center in New Brunswick, N.J., which

included three theaters, dance studios for a resident ballet company and a gallery and offices for New Jersey's fine crafts organizations by the time he left.

His final career move was to serve as executive director of the Wharton Center for Performing Arts on the campus of Michigan State University, where he stayed for 12 years.

Wright also served as a member of the New York League of American Theatres and Producers, and was a Tony Award voter for 12 years.

"I've had a great life. I just segued from one career to the other."

"With his background and experience, Bill brings a wealth of knowledge about fundraising, special events, programming and marketing, which is invaluable," said Laura Buhman '94, Missouri Western development officer and staff representative for the Arts Society.

Knowing about his careers and lifelong love of the arts, it should come as no surprise that when you ask Wright why he chose to support the arts programs at Missouri Western, his answer is a quote from the Broadway musical, "Hello, Dolly!"

"At the end of the play, Hiram tells Dolly one of my favorite lines ever," Wright said. "I think money is like manure. It's not much good unless you spread it around and make things grow."

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

From the Alumni Association President

Dear Griffon family,

WOW! What a year! It is hard to believe that my time as our Alumni Association President is coming to a close. It has been an honor to serve and I look forward to contributing in any other capacities to continue to assist our alma mater.

This year has been an excellent one for our organization and Missouri Western. We've seen success in our increased number of volunteers in alumni chapters, the continued growth of amazing programs such as Mama Griffs, and so much more! None of these



Shelby Coxon '99

accomplishments could take place without the hard work of our Alumni Association board members and chapter volunteers. So I'd like to take this time to say thank you to those individuals who have given of their time and treasure.

We couldn't do it without you!

I'd like to end my term with something I said in my first column as your President: I want to encourage engagement with the University.

This can take many forms, like being up-to-speed on campus events via social media and our publications, being a donor to the Missouri Western State University Foundation, or attending on- or off-campus events. Your level of commitment is yours to define.

Whatever way you choose, I hope you continue to keep Missouri Western and its best interests in mind.

Stay connected, stay committed.
Go Griffs!

Shelby E. Coxon '99
Alumni Association President

Al Landes '74 heads Associated General Contractors of America

Al Landes '74, president and chief operating officer of Herzog Contracting Corp. in St. Joseph, Mo., was recently named president of the Associated General Contractors of America (AGC).

AGC, established in 1918, is the leading association for the construction industry. A full-service national trade association with a nationwide network of chapters, AGC represents nearly 30,000 leading firms in the industry, including general contractors, specialty contractors and service providers and suppliers. It is the largest construction association in the United States.

Landes has been with Herzog for more than 40 years, and he has held his current position since 2009. The company employs approximately 1,800 and completes projects around the world.

In 2008, as president of the national Beavers, a heavy engineering construction association, Landes

designated \$100,000 in scholarships to Missouri Western students in the Department Engineering Technology.

The next year, he founded the Engineering Technology Advancement Committee, which provides private industry support to the department. Members of the committee raise funds for scholarships, endowments, specialized equipment and other needs; provide internship opportunities to current students; make guest speakers available; promote construction-related careers in northwest Missouri; and provide funding and support for Missouri Western's Association of General Contractors Student Chapter.

In 2013, he received the Community Excellence Award at Missouri Western's Engineering Technology banquet. The award recognizes a member of the engineering technology industry who has shown outstanding and continuous commitment to advancing the field as well as support for the University's mission, vision and legacy.

Landes received the Distinguished Alumni Award from Missouri Western's Alumni Association in 2012.

He is active in community service and is the past president of the board of the Sickle Cell Disease Research Foundation and was chairman of its fundraising and finance committees. ■

At the Engineering Technology banquet in March, Grace and Al '74 Landes were "crowned" to recognize Al's appointment as president of the Associated General Contractors of America.



A note from the Director of Alumni Relations

Dear Alumni,

Over the next few months, the Alumni Association Board of Directors and I look forward to hosting several focus group meetings. Our goal is to talk with as many of you as possible so that we can find out what kind of an Alumni Association to which you want to belong.

All of you – from Junior College-era alumni to our recent graduates – have different needs and expectations. Maybe you want to make connections that will assist you in finding a new job. Maybe you want to mentor others on their career path. Maybe you want to travel or meet fellow parents or simply get together to reminisce; whatever your need is, we want to hear from you.

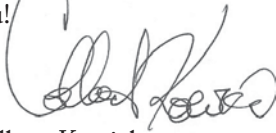
After our discussions, the Alumni Board will gather to write a strategic plan for the Alumni Association. This plan will lead us over the next few years as we

develop programs and activities to suit your needs. We will develop an Alumni Association Makeover: Griffon Style!

We plan to hold meetings in the following areas: St. Joseph (five meetings); Kansas City; Mid-Missouri (Columbia/Jefferson City); and St. Louis.

Invitations will be mailed to randomly selected individuals from each of these regions. If you do not receive an invitation but would like to participate, please call me at (816) 271-5652 or email me at ckowich@missouriwestern.edu.

We look forward to hearing from you!



Colleen Kowich
Director of Alumni Relations

Alumni Directory Note: Over the summer and fall months, you will receive both mail and e-mail communication from a company called Harris Connect and me. We outsource with Harris Connect every five years to update our alumni database and to coordinate the printing of an alumni directory which will be available for sale. All the data they collect will be shared with Missouri Western, and only Missouri Western. They will not share or sell any information to outside parties. If you do not wish to be listed in the printed alumni directory, please contact me by calling (816) 271-5652 or e-mailing ckowich@missouriwestern.edu. ■



2014 R. Dan Boulware Convocation on Critical Issues

**Guest Speaker:
Douglas Brinkley**

**10 a.m. November 4, 2014
M.O. Looney Complex**

| Mardi Gras |

Several alumni and friends gathered to celebrate Mardi Gras at Boudreaux's Louisiana Seafood and Steaks in St. Joseph, including Denece Huffman '00, Carey McMillian '86, Letha Nold '05, Laura Buhman '94, Jennie McDonald '00 and Amber Stice.

Tysa Updike '08: Advice to insure a

Six years ago, Tysa Updike '08 was featured in a Missouri Western Magazine article when she was selected for a very competitive 12-week summer internship at Allstate Insurance Co. in Chicago. She was hired by Allstate after she graduated the following May and has worked for the company ever since.

"I would not be where I am today without the support of the Computer Science, Math and Physics Department at Missouri Western," she says. "I have to thank Dr. (Steve) Klassen for his dedication to his students. He drove me and fellow students to multiple recruiting days, and that is ultimately how I caught my break and was selected for the internship with Allstate."

In September 2013, Updike started a new job with Allstate that took her to Belfast, Ireland. Six days before she traveled overseas, she visited with Dr. Klassen's math students on campus to share her experiences and offer them some career advice.

Tip #1. Do whatever you have to do to get an internship. And, after you complete your internship, stay in touch with your fellow interns.

Of the 18 interns that she worked with in the summer of 2007, Updike, who is originally from the Kansas City area, said 12 were hired for full-time positions at Allstate and six still work for the company. In fact, it was one of her fellow interns who told her about the new position in Belfast. "Networking is so important, especially in a big company," she said.



Tysa Updike '08

Tip #2. Communication skills are very important.

Updike said she has held several positions at Allstate, and in every one, she had to interact with departments across the company. In her current position, she is the liaison between the group constructing "extension of exposure tools" in Belfast and the group using the tools in the Chicago office.

"I am using my previous knowledge and contacts from the analytics team in Chicago to help me build a strong bridge between these two geographically distant teams," she said. "So communication skills are very important."

Tip #3. My advice is very simple; you'll get a lot more accomplished and people will be way more receptive if you bring a great attitude into the office every day. I cannot stress enough the importance of being personable at work.

"I owe my success at Allstate mainly to networking, communication skills, and most importantly, building strong relationships with co-workers," she said. "Being energetic, involved and active with your office while doing good work will take you farther and create more opportunities than producing exceptional work alone."

"Allstate recruits some of the finest talent in the Midwest, and when you get to work with such outgoing, intelligent individuals, you can't help but feel inspired to work harder and have fun doing it," Updike said.

Tip #4. If you don't know something, don't bluff. But, don't admit that you don't know it.

Updike told the students that she often has been in situations where she didn't know something she was asked about. A good answer when that happens: "Let me get back to you on that. I haven't looked at it from that angle."

great career

Tip #5. Don't discount yourself. Companies are looking for interns from both small and large universities.

Updike told the students a story about her daylong interview for the Allstate internship six years ago. When she arrived in Chicago, she and the eight other applicants were told that they were vying for just two intern positions.

"I looked around me and I had a Duke University student on my left, and a Drake University student on my right. I was totally relaxed the rest of the day because I knew I wouldn't get the internship," she said with a laugh. But she believes she secured one of the two spots because, in addition to having the technical background, she was outgoing and a good communicator.

Tip #6. If you're considering an international move, don't underestimate

how big of a challenge relocating actually is, and how big of a commitment you have to make to accept your new home.

"I was a bit overconfident that the transition to living in Northern Ireland would be easy, but moving to another country is extremely hard," she said. "It took me until my trip home at Thanksgiving to really realize that I've been given this great opportunity to live in another country and that I should be rejoicing in all the new aspects of my life instead of mourning the loss of my old."

Updike's fiancé also works for Allstate and is based in Belfast, as well. "I told Pádraic that if my family and friends are coming to Ireland to see me get married, then I want the reception to scream, 'You're in Ireland!'"

And her final words of wisdom to the Missouri Western students?

Tip #7. You are in charge of your own destiny. ■

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Coming Events

May 10 | Spring Commencement, 11 a.m. New for Spring 2014: There will be only one ceremony, and it will be held in Spratt Memorial Stadium. The Alumni Association's reception for graduates and their families will be held in a tent near the Baker Family Fitness Center.

May 16 | Griffons Uncorked! Stonehaus Winery, Lee's Summit, Mo., 6 p.m.

June 14 | Alumni Day at the Mustangs, vs. Griffon Alumni, 5 p.m. Tailgate, 7 p.m. First pitch.

June 20-28 | Western Playhouse presents "Music Man," Potter Hall Theater. Go to Westernplayhouse.com.

June 22 | Junior College Reunion, Remington Hall Atrium, 11:30 a.m.

July 11-19 | Western Playhouse presents "Mother Divine," Potter Hall Theater. Go to Westernplayhouse.com.

July 12 | July 12 Alumni Day at the K, Kansas City Royals vs. Detroit Tigers, 3:30 p.m. Tailgate, 6:10 p.m. First pitch.

Homecoming 2014

Oct. 24 | Golf Outing
Alumni Association 32nd Annual Awards Banquet

Oct. 25 | Parade downtown
Tailgate
Game – Griffons vs. Emporia State Hornets, 1:30 p.m., Spratt Memorial Stadium.

Date to be announced: Alumni Day at Arrowhead

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

Joe Friedman '39: Indeed, a rich man

Dr. Joe Friedman '39 fulfilled a long-time dream when he published his autobiography recently.

"I had to write a book because everywhere I went I told stories," said Dr. Friedman, who turned 94 in March. "I lived a blessed life and I know it. I want to tell people so they can live a blessed life, too."

Dr. Friedman's book, "Yossel the Dreamer," is an account of his experiences serving as a medic in World War II and his two diverse post-war careers: podiatry and show business.

The St. Joseph native received an honorary doctorate from Missouri Western at the commencement ceremony in December 2013.

His book had just been published, and he gave all the graduates a copy of it.

Yossel in the book title, he said, comes from the Yiddish name for Joseph. "The way my parents said Yossel was always a barometer for me – it either meant I was in trouble or I had done something right," he wrote in the book.

As a student at the St. Joseph Junior College, he often worked late at night at a local store and then stayed up to finish homework. He relates how his mother had to come in several times to wake him up in the morning. When she finally called him "Yossel" instead of "Joseph," he knew he better get out of bed.

He was drafted in 1942 and served with the Army's 320th Medical Battalion in World War II. His unit was the first to liberate a concentration camp, and Dr. Friedman said he never forgot it. When the war ended, he helped concentration camp survivors until he was discharged. For several years, he visited area schools to share his war experiences.

The book also tells of how, at the age of 42, Dr. Friedman gave up a successful podiatry practice to follow

his long-time dream of acting professionally, and he was very successful. His first professional theatre job was in Glenwood Springs, Colo. When the three-month stint ended, he moved to New York to pursue his acting career. "Here I was, 42 and balding – no matinee idol –and going into this crazy business," he wrote in the book. "But I had to do this. I didn't want to go through life thinking how my life might have been had I not done what I wanted to do."

After several auditions, he got a part in "Fiddler on the Roof" and traveled all over the U.S. and Canada with the play. He noted that he was in 2,840 performances. "Fiddler on the Roof" was my bonanza," he says. To this day, it doesn't take much persuading to get Dr. Friedman to sing something from "Fiddler on the Roof," usually "If I Were A Rich Man."

Shortly after his run with "Fiddler on the Roof," he and his wife, Gladys, moved to Los Angeles where he continued his active acting career. Dr. Friedman also did research for "Ripley's Believe it or Not," and he won an Emmy Award for his research on "National Geographic's Secrets of the Titanic." They moved to St. Joseph in 1994.

The autobiography is a tribute to Gladys, a singer he met in New York. They married in 1969, and she died in 1995. "She'll be with me until the day I die," Dr. Friedman wrote in the book. "Even if I were a rich man, I could have asked for nothing more."

"The book is also a bouquet to my upbringing, to my parents, to St. Joseph, to my religion and to my friends," he said.

Deborah Butterfield and Sheldon Friedman, Dr. Friedman's nephew, served as co-editors of the project that took more than six years. "Yossel the Dreamer" can be purchased on Amazon.com.

"I went from rags to great riches when I never thought I would leave rags," Dr. Friedman said. ■



Dr. Joe Friedman '39 receives an honorable doctorate at the December 2013 commencement. He is pictured with Dr. Jeanne Daffron '75, provost and vice president of Academic Affairs, and Dr. Robert Vartabedian, president.

1980s

Donna Bromley '84 published her first book, "I See the Zoo in You," and a Kindle edition can be purchased at Amazon.com. She has written 10 other books, a Christmas song and a puzzle she hopes to publish, as well.

Susan Moore '85 was named principal of the Northwest Special Programs Center in Justin, Texas. Moore holds an educational doctorate from Nova Southeastern University and has a master's from Oklahoma State University.



Corky Marquart '84 was named market president and CEO for Commerce Bank in St. Joseph. Marquart, who graduated with a BSBA in

Accounting, has been with the bank since 1986, when she began as the controller of the St. Joseph market. She has held several positions since, and has been serving as commercial team leader as well as executive vice president.

Marquart currently serves as the chair of the Missouri Western State University Foundation Board of Directors.

1990s

Leanna (Lutz) Brunner '90 recently published "Final Detour," a suspense/thriller/romance book that is available on Amazon.com. The book is the first of a trilogy, and the second installment, "Dead End," will come out this spring. Brunner also hosted a writer's conference for aspiring authors, Write the Dream, at Bartle Hall in Kansas City, Mo. in March 2014.

Mike Neff '90 was appointed as the director of strategy and operations for The Canadian Institute of Diversity and Inclusion, based in Toronto.

Terry Hall '92 was promoted to vice president of Regulatory Affairs for Hillyard Industries in St. Joseph, Mo.

David Jones '93 is the chief operating officer/ chief experience officer with Foutch Brothers of St. Joseph, Mo.



Brian Johnson '94 and his wife, Heather, announce the birth of a son, Tyler Owen, born April 4, 2014. Tyler joins big brothers Will and Hayden.

Stephanie (Greve) Bitterman '98 was elected to the Maslon, Edelman, Borman and Brand LLP's partnership Jan. 1, 2014. Bitterman practices in Maslon's Litigation Group where she represents clients ranging from small business owners to large corporations throughout all stages of litigation. The firm is based in Minneapolis.

2000s

Brian Keesee '00 was hired as executive director of clinical services for the North American Clinical division of Packaging Coordinators Inc. The company operates 14 facilities across North America and Europe and packages medicines that go to more than 100 countries around the world.

Dustin Worrell '01, became president of Dynamic Research Technologies in December 2013. His sister, Ashley Worrell '98, became the chief financial officer. Dynamic Research Technologies is a family-owned business in northern Missouri.

Stacey (Calcote) Williamson '02 was elected the state president-elect of the Missouri State Teachers Association, the largest education association in Missouri. She will serve three total years and become the state president in November 2014.

Nic Sikora '03, who lives in Falls City, Neb., recently sent the following note to Missouri Western's alumni office:

I have a couple bits of interesting information. First, I come from a very small high school — Sacred Heart in Falls City, Neb. — with about 20 students per class. There are four graduates (that I know of) from Sacred Heart that are also Griffons: Ryan Sevcik '04, Luke Brennan '04, Dan Pfister '05 and me. The part that I find interesting is that three of us already hold our doctorate degree and as of May 2014, all four of us will. Ryan and I hold Juris Doctorates, Dan has his Ph.D, and Luke earns his

Doctor of Chiropractic this month. We have Missouri Western to thank for our undergraduate degrees.

Second, I remember reading a story about Ben '04 and Dana '08 Doornink and their son Griffon. I named one of my twin sons Griffon. Griffon Phillip and Alvin Patrick were born on March 19, 2010. My wife, Andrea, and I also have a 9-month-old, Franklin Tobiasz.



Jim McKinley '04 and his wife, Regan, announce the birth of their first child, Dillin James, born Oct. 18, 2013.

Shannon Petsche '06 is the recreation facility manager for the City of Alamogordo, N.M.

Andrew Murphy '07 married Brienne Shaver June 15, 2013. The couple resides in Macon, Mo.

Jeremy Wilder '07 and his wife, Laura, announce the birth of a daughter, Rilynn Ainsley, born Dec. 10, 2013. Wilder earned an MBA from William Woods University in August 2013.



Koren (Dailey) Wills '08 and her husband, Cody, announce the birth of a son, Ian Boyd, born Dec. 2, 2013.

Autumn (Greear) '08 and David '09 Haeker: David graduated with his Master of Science in Industrial Engineering from New Mexico State University in December 2013. He is employed with Trac at White Sands Missile Range New Mexico. Autumn is employed as a K-8 music teacher for the Las Cruces Public School District.



Tiffany (Zimmerman) '08 and Cody Austin '09 announce the birth of a son, Elliott Jay, born May 20, 2013.

Garrett Holtz '09 and his wife, Maureen, announce the birth of a son, Luke Robert, born Feb. 17, 2014. Luke has an older brother, Patrick.



Bret Peery '09 and his wife, Jennifer, announce the birth of a daughter, Karli Lynn, born Feb. 4, 2014.

2010s

Kelsey (Kieber) '10 and Kyle '10 Wolfe announce the birth of a daughter, Reese Lynn, born Dec. 18, 2013.

Kayla Aucutt '11 and Luke Bachman were married July 20, 2013. The couple resides in Kirksville, Mo.

Joshua Colley '11 is an adjunct faculty member at the Art Institutes International Kansas City in Lenexa, Kan. He teaches Sound Design and Music History and facilitates the audio video studio, teaching techniques in post-production. Colley noted that he learned how to use post-production software at Missouri Western.

Brett Kiser, '11 recently published "The Pin-up Girls of World War II" through Bearmanor Media. The book is a historical work recounting the rise of pin-up art during the war years. Included in the book are biographies of some of the famous pin-ups, such as Betty Grable, Jane Russell, Carol Landis and others. ■

In Memory

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

Betty Jo Cheney '47, Prescott, Ariz., Nov. 23, 2013.

Wilma (Colville) Curran '80, St. Joseph, Mo., May 27, 2013.

Laurie Kay (Campbell) Groover '85, Keller, Texas, Oct. 14, 2013.

Chuck Haskins '71, Woodbury, Minn., July 17, 2013.

Dennis Herbster '73, Springfield, Mo., Dec. 6, 2013.

Rebecca Keltner '82, Kansas City, Mo., May 23, 2013.

Robert G. Poage '47, Rocklin, Calif., June 14, 2013.

Mildred Sites '38, Webster Groves, Mo. April 12, 2011. Her daughter, Mary Edwards, wrote that after her mother graduated from the Junior College, she taught grades one through eight in a one-room schoolhouse near St. Joseph. She earned her bachelor's degree during the summers at Northwest Missouri State University. She later taught in Agency and St. Joseph and after moving to St. Louis and taking several years off to raise three children, taught in the Maplewood-Richmond Heights District in St. Louis County until retiring in 1982. "She followed with interest the growth of Missouri Western as it grew into a four-year college and later a university. She was also proud to be a member of Phi Theta Kappa while at the St. Joseph Junior College," Edwards wrote.

Tell us what's new!

Name _____ Maiden _____ Class of _____

Spouse _____ Class of _____ Alum's Birthday _____

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Member of the Clock Tower Society, an honorary society of donors who have made the MWSU Foundation a beneficiary of their estate and financial planning.





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Science Fun!

Several academic departments at Missouri Western participate in the St. Joseph Museum's Super Science Saturday held in Remington Hall every February. This year, approximately 850 enjoyed the daylong event.

