

ADVANCEMENTS

A PUBLICATION OF THE MISSOURI STATE UNIVERSITY FOUNDATION | FALL 2023



Innovative program propels Bears **FROM STUDENT TO PROFESSIONAL**

Hotel Nikko's Manager In Training program, set up by alumna Anna Marie Presutti for MSU students, offers a scholarship, job shadowing and housing at the luxury property in San Francisco. Students are offered a job at the end of the program. It's a transformative experience for the Bears who participate.

MAROON SPIRIT IN BLACK TIE IS BACK!



MarooNation Ball CASINO NIGHT



Join us in St. Louis

MAY 4, 2024

The much-anticipated MarooNation Ball events are back — with a twist! These Las Vegas casino-themed nights will benefit student scholarships. Hit the floor and enjoy casino games and live entertainment. Ante up, put on your poker face and join us!

GET TICKETS OR BECOME A SPONSOR

 MissouriState.edu/MarooNationBall

 417-836-4143



ADVANCEMENTS

FALL 2023

MISSOURI STATE UNIVERSITY OFFICE OF UNIVERSITY ADVANCEMENT

Debbie Branson '99, *Director of Foundation Relations*
Michaela Bennett '16, *Assistant Director of College and Constituency Engagement*
Scott Carter '91, *Director of Development*
Jacqui Coones '07 & '14, *Executive Director of Prospect Development*
Kerry Dickerson, *Senior Director of Athletics Development*
Katie Dudden '03, *Assistant Director of Donor and Alumni Relations, MSU-West Plains*
W. Brent Dunn '85 & '91, *Vice President for University Advancement*
Greg Fansler, *Executive Director of Engagement and Alumni Relations*
Wendy Ferguson, *Assistant Vice President for Development and Strategy*
Arianna Gardner '18 & '22, *Assistant Director of Student and Young Alumni Engagement*
Paige Grisham '16 & '18, *Director of Athletics Development*
Alison Harper, *Director of Annual Funds*
Cindy Howell '80, *Director of Development*
Lindsey McDaniel, *Assistant Director of Prospect Development*
Kelsey Menefee '17 & '18, *Director of Donor Relations and Special Events*
Beth Nichols, *Assistant Director, Chapter and Corporate Engagement*
Rachel Peterson '03 & '20, *Director of Development and Annual Giving, MSU-West Plains*
Angela Pinegar '92 & '11, *Assistant Director of Advancement Services*
Sarah Riley, *Director of Development*
Angela Rowe, *Strategic Communications and Content Specialist*
Karl Schmidt, *Executive Director of Major and Planned Giving*
Natalie Seever, *Interim Co-Director of Advancement Services*
Stephanie Smith '04 & '06, *Senior Director of Donor Relations and Special Events*
Jo Spurrier, *Director of Leadership Annual Giving*
Yulia Whittington '11, *Director of Development*

MISSOURI STATE UNIVERSITY FOUNDATION BOARD OF TRUSTEES EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

Mark L. McQueary, *chair, Springfield*
James H. Wilson '84, *chair elect, Springfield*
Judy Breeding '73, *Springfield*
Bonnalie O. Campbell '55, *Houston, Texas*
Tim Foote '72, *The Villages, Florida*
John D. Foster, *Springfield*
Diane L. Jenkins '84, *Tulsa, Oklahoma*
Beverly Keltner '73, *Springfield*
Mary H. Schrag, *Springfield*
L. Joseph Carmichael '69, *immediate past chair, ex-officio*
Clifton M. Smart III, *president, Missouri State University, ex-officio*
Dr. Anson Elliott, *Board of Governors, ex-officio*
Aaren Muex '02, *Alumni Association, ex-officio*
W. Brent Dunn '85 & '91, *executive director of the Missouri State University Foundation, ex-officio*
Cindy Schull '86, *treasurer, ex-officio*
Cindy R. Busby, *secretary*

PUBLICATION PRODUCED BY MSU DIVISION OF MARKETING AND COMMUNICATIONS

Publisher: Office of creative services
Director of creative services: Veronica Adinegara
Magazine managing editor: Michelle S. Rose
Magazine art director and designer: Rylee Williams
Content manager and approver: Stephanie Smith
Staff photographers: Jesse Scheve, Kevin White
Staff writers: Juliana Goodwin, Michelle S. Rose

CONTACT THE FOUNDATION

MissouriStateFoundation.org
SPRINGFIELD
417-836-4143 • Foundation@MissouriState.edu
WEST PLAINS
417-255-7240 • WPadvancement@MissouriState.edu

Advancements magazine is published by Missouri State University. Postmaster: Send address changes to Missouri State University Foundation, 901 S. National Ave., Springfield, MO 65897

Missouri State University is an Equal Opportunity/Affirmative Action/Minority/Female/Veterans/Disability/Sexual Orientation/Gender Identity Employer and Institution DEV 05-16-2023

Contents

On the cover



MSU alumni Tyler Armer (standing), Allison Glass (left) and Justin Chen (right) sit with alumna Anna Marie Presutti (center) at the Hotel Nikko in San Francisco. Presutti '86 is the vice president and general manager of Hotel Nikko, Inc., and Hotel Nikko San Francisco.

PHOTO BY TRI NGUYEN



Hotel Nikko's program is a boon for Bears..... 12

Selected students receive a scholarship during their junior or senior years. Once they graduate, Hotel Nikko relocates them to San Francisco. The Bears receive free housing during the program, which lasts six to nine months. When the program is over, the graduates are offered a job as a manager at the luxury hotel.



Monumental gift will create new campus "front porch" 6

An eight-figure gift from the C.W. Titus Foundation in honor of Judith Enyeart Reynolds will support construction of a facility designed to enhance arts, social sciences and humanities education.



Thanks to sponsors of Missouri Public Affairs Hall of Fame 8

The annual event hosted by MSU honors inductees who have a connection to the state of Missouri and serve as examples of global citizens.



Bears Women's Impact Network: A new group 24

Bears WIN honors the impact of women by addressing some of the most pressing needs of students. The goal of this initiative is to make a long-lasting and positive effect on the university.



HISTORY IN THE MAKING

Record-breaking private support has Missouri State thriving.

They say good things take time. And the announcement of the largest one-time gift in Missouri State history, revealed in August, exemplifies just that.

As I was thinking about what to say in this issue, history keeps coming to mind. Why history, you wonder? Because the past paved the road that led us here.

That largest one-time gift is built on decades of support from those who want to see Missouri State University dream and achieve bigger.

I don't know what the future will bring, but I know the recent history you've helped us achieve:

- In fiscal year 2023, which ran from July 1, 2022, to June 30, 2023, gifts to the Missouri State University Foundation surpassed \$20 million for the sixth consecutive year. Nearly 20,000 alumni and friends contributed \$24,243,093.
- In the 2023-24 academic year, for the first time ever, more than \$4 million in foundation scholarships has been offered to Missouri State students. Scholarships empower current Bears. They help Missouri State enroll the most talented and promising students, regardless of their ability to pay. Foundation scholarships are an investment in a student's success and you continue to show up and change lives with your generosity.

We have so much to be thankful for, including a university president who is committed to the impact of private support and external partnerships. As you have probably heard, President Clif Smart is retiring at the end of this academic year. His legacy and support to the foundation and advancing the university will benefit MSU and the community for generations.

Gifts in the foundation's history have transformed the physical campus. They have created educational opportunities and experiences. They have transformed programs. They have attracted and retained faculty at the top of their fields. Private support has lit a fire in the heart and soul of this university. I wish I could individually thank every person who has made a gift in the history of the foundation. That history is creating Missouri State's future. Your support deserves to be celebrated.

Let us not forget our history as we look towards a future you've helped create: A future where education is accessible and anything is possible.

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Brent Dunn". The signature is fluid and cursive.

W. Brent Dunn

Executive director of the Missouri State University Foundation and vice president for university advancement



Since the Missouri State University Foundation began in 1981, it has raised

\$450 million+

BRENT'S TOP 5

MY FAVORITE THINGS ABOUT A NEW ACADEMIC YEAR



THE SOUNDS OF THE PRIDE MARCHING BAND

Campus is filled with the sounds of the Pride Marching Band as camps take place and practices begin. My afternoon walks across campus to meetings start to sound different as the band returns and practices begin. These beloved sounds are the audio intro to another new and exciting chapter for all the Bears who call Missouri State home.



THE FLURRY OF ACTIVITY

Don't get me wrong, campus is nice and quiet in the summer — well, less people traffic, usually lots of construction traffic. But as the students come back, you see endless possibilities. You see groups meeting and recruiting members. You see athletic teams practicing. You see the hustle and bustle to and from class. A new group of Bears moves into the residence halls and makes campus their home. I love it. It is the start of a journey for some, the continuation of a journey for others and the road to the future for all.



PUBLIC AFFAIRS EVENTS

Missouri State has a statewide mission in public affairs. With that comes incredible opportunities to experience and celebrate public affairs each fall.

First is the Public Affairs Conference, which happens each September. It has a different theme each year.

Each fall, the university also hosts the event that honors new inductees into the state of Missouri's Public Affairs Hall of Fame. This event recognizes individuals who serve as examples of global citizens. They define the true essence of public affairs and consistently act for the benefit of others.



FOOTBALL AND BEARFEST VILLAGE

Perhaps nothing means the fall semester has started quite like the first home football game and BearFest Village tailgate. Home game days don't just happen in, well, a day. BearFest Village preparations and set-up begin well in advance of game day. That creates a ripple of excitement on campus. When the tents start going up, you know it's time. I love the way home football games bring the campus and the community together.



NEW STUDENT CONVOCATION

I hope everyone has the opportunity to go to this event at least once. Thousands of new Bears and Bear representatives, all in one place, all excited for a new year — it's electric. Every year the students look a little younger and I ... don't.

WANT TO ATTEND PUBLIC AFFAIRS EVENTS?

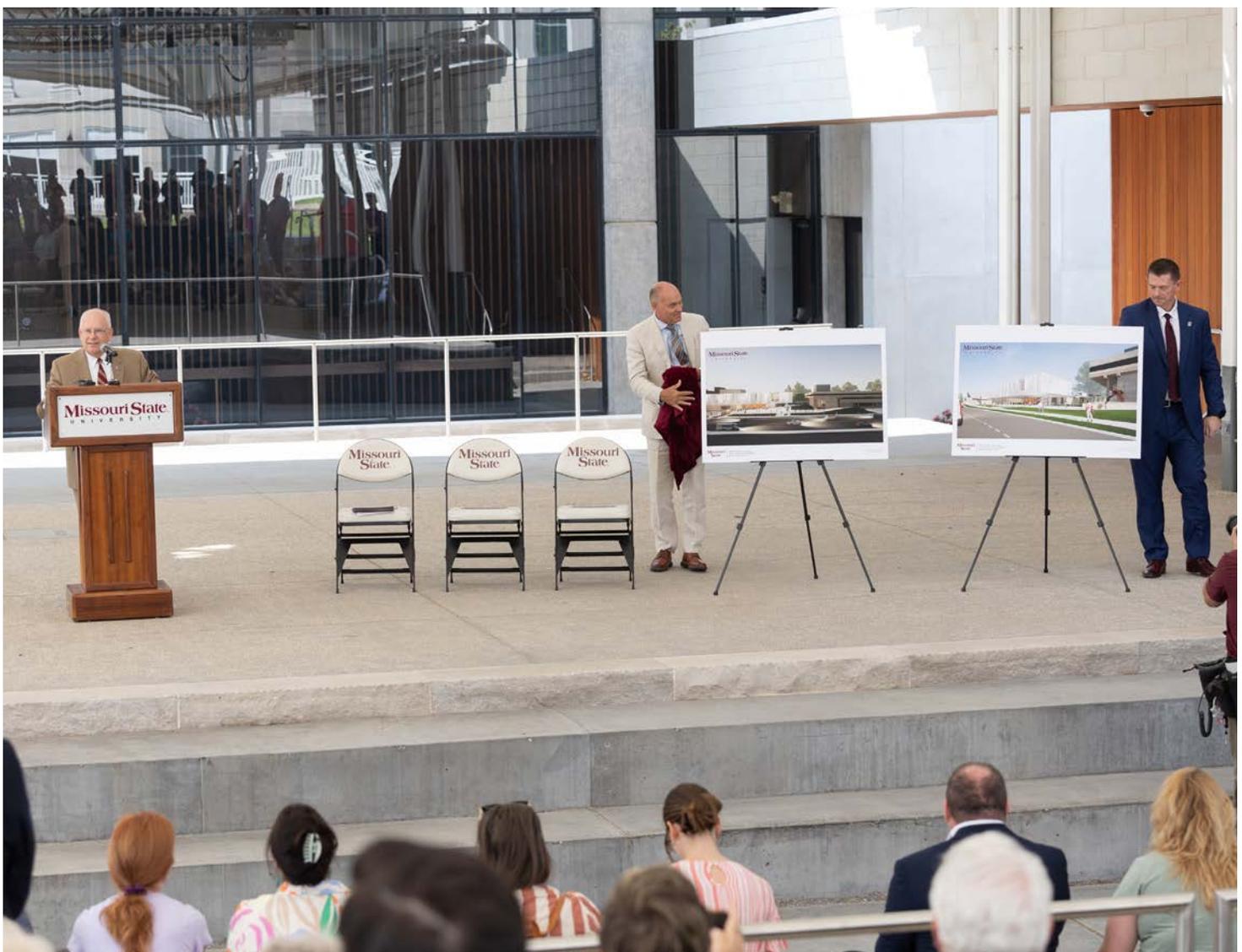
Public affairs programming, like the New Student Convocation and the Public Affairs Conference, happens throughout the year. Events are open to all members of the community.

PublicAffairs.MissouriState.edu

Largest one-time gift in Missouri State history will lead to

NEW “FRONT PORCH” TO CAMPUS

C.W. Titus Foundation honors legacy of Judith Enyeart Reynolds with eight-figure donation.



The announcement of the gift and the unveiling of the plans was led by (from left) MSU President Clif Smart; Brent Dunn, vice president for university advancement and executive director of the Missouri State University Foundation; and Dr. Shawn Wahl, dean of the Judith Enyeart Reynolds College of Arts, Social Sciences and Humanities. PHOTO BY KEVIN WHITE



The current Art Annex provides space to the department of theatre and dance, including acting studios, costume storage and more. The annex also has space for the office of classroom instructional technology. The original structure was brought to campus from Camp Crowder in Neosho, Missouri, after World War II. The building was renovated in 1989. PHOTO BY KEVIN WHITE

Driven by the legacy and inspiration of Judith Enyeart Reynolds, Missouri State University is empowered to dream bigger together and expand its destination campus for the arts, social sciences and humanities.

An eight-figure gift from the C.W. Titus Foundation, announced in August, is supporting construction of a state-of-the-art facility named in honor of Judith Enyeart Reynolds.

It will enhance arts, social sciences and humanities education.

The donation is the largest one-time, single gift in university history. “This gift is truly transformational,” said Brent Dunn, vice president for university advancement and executive director of the Missouri State Foundation. “Private support changes the university, and we are so thankful for the C.W. Titus Foundation’s continued support and trust in Missouri State University.”

The university’s new “front porch”

The campus entryway at Grand Street, just west of National Avenue, will be developed by

this gift into a welcoming threshold to the community.

Inspired by front porches in residential neighborhoods, it will be a place of connection and a celebration of all things art.

The building will replace the current Art Annex along Grand Street. The project is slated for completion in late fall 2025.

Part of our destination campus

This gift leads to a pivotal moment in university history. It makes a statement as the university embraces and promotes the arts, social sciences and humanities to become a destination campus.

This gift builds on the work already completed to the university’s arts corridor in downtown Springfield, known as Brick City, as well as renovations to university music facilities in Ellis Hall, the addition of the John Goodman Amphitheatre in the Judith Enyeart Reynolds Arts Park and the recent completion of the Grand Street underpass.

“This is transformational for our campus and will affect not only the students, faculty and staff of Missouri State, but also add a

new artistic focal point for the community,” said Dr. Shawn Wahl, dean of the Judith Enyeart Reynolds College of Arts, Social Sciences and Humanities.

“This project supports our vision to protect and enhance all academic programs in the arts, humanities and social sciences at Missouri State.”

C.W. Titus Foundation’s gift history

Over the years, the C.W. Titus Foundation has provided significant support for public broadcasting through Ozarks Public Television and KSMU.

Most recently, in 2020, the foundation made an eight-figure gift to name the former Judith Enyeart Reynolds College of Arts and Letters, establish student scholarships and support an art park.

“This building completes a vision for the southeast corner of campus and reimagines the gateway to the arts at Missouri State,” said Cliff Smart, MSU president.

“It changes the physical landscape of campus and not only fulfills a strategic vision, but also enhances the community we call home.” ▾

FIVE INDUCTED INTO MISSOURI PUBLIC AFFAIRS HALL OF FAME

John Ashcroft, Father Moses Berry, Tom Carlson, Lt. Gen. Karen Dyson and Rachel Mack Robinson were inducted in early September.

- A dedicated former public servant.**
- An Eastern Orthodox Church priest.**
- A community leader and founder of a nonprofit news outlet.**
- A retired U.S. Army three-star general.**
- A trailblazing entrepreneur.**

These are among the titles and accomplishments of the Missouri Public Affairs Hall of Fame 2023 members, who were inducted Sept. 8 during a ceremony at The Old Glass Place in Springfield. They were selected because they have a connection to the state of Missouri and serve as examples of global citizens.



Inductees attended a dinner and ceremony Sept. 8. PHOTO BY CHANDLER HARRIS

THE 2023 INDUCTEES



John Ashcroft

A lawyer, politician and professor, Ashcroft has been in public service for more than four decades. He served as Missouri auditor (1973-74), Missouri assistant attorney general (1974-76)

and attorney general (1976-85), Missouri governor (1985-93), U.S. senator (1995-2001) and U.S. attorney general (2001-05). When nominating Ashcroft to serve as U.S. attorney general in 2000, President George W. Bush called him a “man of great integrity, a man of great judgment and a man who knows the law.”



Father Moses Berry

Berry is a priest of the Eastern Orthodox Church in America practicing in Missouri. He is a direct descendant of slaves and an illegitimate descendant of Nathaniel Boone, the son of the

legendary American hero Daniel Boone. He spent much of his life on a spiritual quest. It led him to start the Ozarks Afro-American Heritage Museum on his family’s legacy farm in Ash Grove. Berry lectures locally and nationally on African American history and on issues in African American spirituality and Orthodox Christian mission.



Tom Carlson

Carlson is the current publisher and financial backer of the Queen City’s nonprofit newspaper, the Springfield Daily Citizen. He served in local government for more than two decades

as a city councilman and was Springfield’s mayor for 14 years. He spent his career as a lawyer and in housing development. Carlson also served on many local nonprofit boards and organizations.



Rachel Mack Robinson (MSU alumna, 2012)

Robinson is the founder and president of DotCom Therapy, or DCT, the leading pediatric teletherapy provider partnering with employers and schools across the U.S.

She started the company after discovering a lack of access to quality therapy services. By using technology, DCT provides mental health, speech and occupational teletherapy to thousands of children. She is a trailblazer in teletherapy and female entrepreneurship.



Lt. Gen. Karen Dyson (MSU alumna, 1980)

Dyson dedicated her career to the U.S. Army. She was the first female finance officer to achieve the rank of three-star general. Dyson has served as director on the boards of the Army and

Air Force Exchange Service, as well as on the board of the Defense Commissary Agency. She retired in 2017 as military deputy to assistant secretary of the Army for financial management and comptroller. She was inducted into the ROTC Hall of Fame in 2021.

MAKE YOUR NOMINATION FOR THE 2024 AWARDS

Do you know someone who exemplifies support of public affairs and engaged citizenship, and has a connection to the state of Missouri? Nominate them for this award!

PublicAffairs.MissouriState.edu/HallOfFame

Thank you to the sponsors of this event!

COMMUNITY SPONSORS



UNIVERSITY SPONSORS

- College of Business
- College of Natural and Applied Sciences
- Division for Administrative Services
- Division for Information Services
- Division of Community and Global Partnerships

- Division of Marketing and Communications
- McQueary College of Health and Human Services
- Office of the President
- Student Affairs, Public Affairs and Service Learning

SIGHTS AND SCENES: SPRING AND SUMMER 2023





6

1. Foundation staff, Missouri State staff, 425 Downtown staff and community members joined together for a ribbon cutting Feb. 23 at The Old Glass Place, an event venue purchased by the foundation and managed by 425 Downtown.
PHOTO BY KEVIN WHITE

2. Students show off the vials of fountain water given on Fountain Day, held April 11. This tradition celebrates the first day the fountain is turned on each spring.
PHOTO BY JESSE SCHEVE

3. Students and faculty in the department of theatre and dance were involved in the world premiere of the musical “In Vain” this spring. The story is a take on Oscar Wilde’s novel “The Picture of Dorian Gray.”
PHOTO BY JESSE SCHEVE

4. The women’s golf team claimed its first Missouri Valley Conference championship since 2018.
PHOTO FROM MSU ATHLETICS

5. The Holt V. Spicer Debate Forum Bears took home trophies at the 2023 National Forensic Association-Lincoln Douglas championship.
PHOTO BY KEVIN WHITE

6. MSU awarded more than 2,950 degrees in spring 2023. Students earned 2,049 bachelor’s degrees, 757 master’s degrees, 118 doctorate degrees and 29 specialist degrees.
PHOTO BY JESSE SCHEVE

7. Tent Theatre kicked off its first season in the John Goodman Amphitheatre with a production of the musical “Anything Goes.”
PHOTO BY JESSE SCHEVE

8. Bears work July 12 at the campus garden, a student-managed sustainability project. It provides fresh produce to the campus and Springfield communities through the Bear Pantry.
PHOTO BY JESSE SCHEVE

9. Chrystal Irons speaks July 19 at the 10th anniversary of the efactory, MSU’s one-stop shop for business owners, entrepreneurs and employers. Irons is the director of the Missouri State University Small Business and Technology Development Center, located at the efactory.
PHOTO BY JESSE SCHEVE



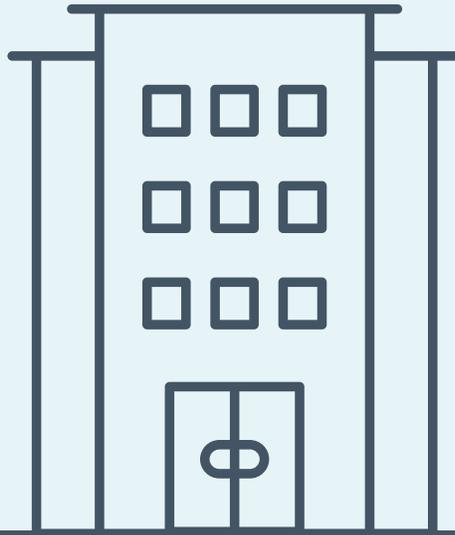
7



8



9



Scholarship and leadership program at
luxury hotel puts many Bears

ON THE PATH TO MANAGEMENT

Hotel Nikko's Manager In Training program, or MIT, was set up by an alumna just for MSU students. It offers a scholarship, job shadowing and housing at the property in San Francisco. MIT molds Bears into professionals who have a grasp on all areas of hotel administration. It's likely the only hotel in the country with such a program.

WRITTEN BY JULIANA GOODWIN



MSU alumni Allison Glass (from left), Tyler Armer and Justin Chen at the Hotel Nikko in San Francisco. PHOTO BY TRI NGUYEN



Tyler Armer '21 completed the MIT program, then first worked as operations manager of the hotel's performing arts venue. PHOTO BY TRI NGUYEN

In April 2021, Tyler Armer was a month away from graduation and didn't have a job.

While many College of Business students have positions lined up before commencement, the entertainment management major was in an industry that had been slammed by the pandemic.

The clock was ticking.

Then he opened an email saying an executive committee from Hotel Nikko — a luxury hotel in downtown San Francisco — was in town, recruiting for the hotel's Manager in Training scholarship program, or MIT.

"San Francisco is my dream city," he said. "It sounds like this is a really cool hotel. I was just like, 'You know what? I don't do

hospitality. That's not what my experience is, but this feels like a sign."

Fellow student Kylie Aulgur opened that same email and went to the meet and greet.

Both of them landed a spot in the hotel's innovative MIT program.

Alumna's campus visit leads to program

The Manager in Training scholarship program was started by alumna Anna Marie Presutti '86, the general manager and vice president of Hotel Nikko.

In 2015, Presutti was invited to speak at the department of hospitality leadership. Presutti mentioned to the department head that she would like to start a scholarship.

"My initial thought was: How do we wipe out somebody's debt?" Presutti said. "Then, as we started to dig deeper into that, we were like, 'Well, maybe we can spread the wealth a little bit and offer opportunities.' It's just evolved from there."

What evolved was a scholarship, learning opportunity and job training.

Students get to soak up knowledge

Here is how MIT works: Selected students receive up to \$7,500 in a scholarship for tuition and expenses. The scholarship qualifies them to be part of the MIT program after graduation. They are eligible to apply their junior or senior year.

continued on page 16



2015

Scholarship is established.



2016

First scholarships are awarded.



6

MSU graduates are currently managers at Hotel Nikko.

23

Missouri State graduates have gone through the Manager in Training program.

2

Bears recently started the MIT program.

Hotel Nikko holds a

Presidents Medallion

in The Founders Club



\$65,000

average salary for Manager in Training graduates.

\$120,000

approximate investment from Hotel Nikko for each student who participates.

\$7,500

potential scholarship amount per student, which goes toward tuition, fees and MSU expenses.



9 months

The length of time Bears train at the hotel, working their way through every department. They are provided housing for all that time.



2 years

length of time MIT managers are asked to work at the hotel after the MIT program ends.



About Anna Marie Presutti

Presutti holds a Missouri State bachelor's degree in communication disorders, which she earned in 1986. She was named MSU's 2023 Outstanding Alumna (above). She is the general manager of Hotel Nikko San Francisco and vice president of Hotel Nikko International, a Tokyo-based company. In 2006, she was named the first female officer and general manager in the history of the Nikko Hotels International chain, which has properties in Asia, Europe, North America and the South Pacific. Under Presutti's leadership, the Hotel Nikko San Francisco has been named one of the Best Places to Work in the Bay Area by the San Francisco Business Times.



Anna Marie Presutti (right) has helped make the Hotel Nikko extremely pet-friendly.
PHOTO BY TRI NGUYEN



Job titles held by MIT program grads

When students finish the MIT program, they are offered a position in management at Hotel Nikko. Here's a list of potential, past and current job titles.



Banquet manager



Front office manager



Executive meeting manager



Front desk manager



Food and beverage manager



IT manager



Human resources manager



Marketing manager



Housekeeping manager



Sales manager



Operations manager for Feinstein's, a performing arts space at the hotel

Once they graduate, Hotel Nikko relocates them to San Francisco. The Bears receive free housing during the program, which lasts six to nine months. Initially the program was set up for a year, but it was condensed to nine months and some have completed it in six.

"Living in the hotel is a huge cost-saving perk, and it lets you save up for living in San Francisco, a place where things are not cheap," Armer said.

The program helps them make an easy transition from Missouri to San Francisco.

"You don't have to worry about housing," Aulgur said. "You don't have to worry if you're going to have friends there."

The MIT students then rotate between every department in the hotel, training under managers and job shadowing. Students may shuffle between housekeeping, security, human resources, food and beverage, sales and more.

The Bears have one job: Be a sponge.

Justin Chen is an MIT program graduate who works at Hotel Nikko as front office manager. He said the experience quickly broadened his knowledge.

"With MIT, you have an idea of how the hotel works and how every department works so you understand the whole operation, not just one area," said Chen.

The recent graduates are paid a salary of \$65,000 and receive one free meal per shift. With so few expenses, it's a chance to

save money or pay off loans — a huge help to young professionals, participants said.

When the program is over, the graduates are offered a job at the luxury hotel.

"You go through the program and at the end, you'll be offered a management position. That's security," Aulgur said.

Many of the students discover a new passion at the hotel and end up wanting to work in a different area than they had initially expressed an interest in when they started the program, said Presutti.

Aside from wanting to give back to her alma mater, Presutti said the idea for this program was sparked because mid-level managers are the hardest positions to fill at the hotel. This helps her fill a void, at an investment of about \$120,000 per person.

Presutti said as far as she knows, they are the only hotel in the country with such a program: "I think this is one of those programs that a lot of companies won't touch because it is so expensive to do. But the outcome is, if we do it and they get it right, we end up with some really good people."

It has been worth it, Presutti said.

Program teaches hard and soft skills

The concept of training in every department in a business is unique.

"Going through the program and forming relationships with everybody is one of the



Tyler Armer '21 is now an executive meeting manager at the hotel. PHOTO BY TRI NGUYEN



Justin Chen '21 is a front office manager at Hotel Nikko. He enjoyed learning about each department at the property. PHOTO BY TRI NGUYEN

coolest things about MIT, and it makes each day a lot easier,” Armer said.

This perspective allows participants to understand how some mistakes can happen and how to communicate with other managers when issues arise, said Caroline Schautteet. She is a Belgium native and MIT graduate. Schautteet said MIT was an amazing learning opportunity that allowed students to make mistakes without being afraid of serious repercussions.

“It’s a great opportunity for students who just come out of college. The moment you have a problem, they will never point fingers, they will help you solve the problem. It’s wonderful,” Schautteet said.

Being able to connect with every department and communicate across departments is invaluable, agreed Bryan Paige, another MIT graduate. When you meet so many people on the property, you get a better understanding of the culture, too.

“There are about 10 employees who have been there since the hotel opened,” said Paige. “Most of the people have been there for 5, 10, 15 plus years. If I don’t know what I’m doing, I can lean on those guys. Everyone is very helpful and fun. We do a lot of things together. This is something I’ve never experienced working at any other job.”

The MIT program teaches you how to be flexible and mentally agile, Armer added.

While the graduates all touted aspects of the program, there was another huge perk — living in San Francisco.

“San Francisco is a big young-professional city,” Aulgur said. “I can’t even imagine where I would be if I didn’t come here because of all the growth I’ve gone through. I have changed for the better. I’ve come out of my shell. If you want to grow your career, but also want personal growth, this is the opportunity for you.” ▾



Allison Glass '23 started the MIT program in June 2023. PHOTO BY TRI NGUYEN

MEET 5 BEARS WORKING AT HOTEL NIKKO

Justin Chen '21

Title: Front office manager

From: Taiwan

Activities at MSU: President of the Taiwanese Student Association



“I really love the hotel. Not just the people ... but also the culture”

Justin Chen, a Taiwanese native, earned his undergraduate degree in tourism management.

When it was time to pursue a master's, he turned to the hospitality management program at Missouri State.

Being a Bear runs in the family: Both of his sisters graduated from MSU. The siblings all enjoy the hospitality industry and loved their time at Missouri State.

The MIT was an excellent learning opportunity. Chen was able to understand how the hotel operates and how each department relates to each other.

His favorite rotation, he said, was food and beverage.

After the program, he landed a job in the front office, which he loves.

From his position, he's able to interact with the hotel's guests.

“San Francisco is totally different from Springfield. It is a big city, so you have more chance to contact diversity. I really love the hotel. Not just the people who work there, but also the culture of the hotel,” he said.

The culture is one that allows its managers to make mistakes, and doesn't chastise them but rather uses it as a learning opportunity.

He thinks the MIT program prepared him for management.

Now, he's trying to extend his working visa because his goal is to continue to work at Hotel Nikko.

“I would love to stay longer,” Chen said. “It is difficult to find a company culture like Nikko. The hotel helped me apply for the working visa. Fingers crossed I get it!”

Tyler Armer, '21

Title: Executive meeting manager

From: Prairie Village, Kansas

Activities at MSU: The Hibernotes; Delta Sigma Pi professional business fraternity; the In-School Players; Entertainment Management Association; played on handball team for four years



“It gave me a chance to actually reach for what I wanted”

Tyler Armer was an example of right major, wrong time.

He was an entertainment management student, graduating during COVID when many events were still virtual.

The Manager in Training program was a lifesaver. He had a couple of part-time job offers but is glad he didn't take them.

“I think it would've been something that I didn't really want to do, and I would've just settled. When this opportunity came up, it gave me a chance to actually reach for what I wanted.”

Once he completed his Manager in Training program, he was able to apply his college skills as operations manager of Feinstein's, the hotel's performing arts venue. He loved working there and was able to meet people he idolized when performers would come through.

“Feinstein's is a hidden gem,” Armer said.

He loves the culture at Hotel Nikko because managers' opinions are valued.

“Anna Marie loves her MITs because she went to Missouri State and she's from Kansas City. She's not like, ‘These silly college kids from Missouri.’ She and all of her executive committee respect the views and opinions of everybody here,” he said.

Armer, who is part of the LGBTQ community, said his lifelong dream was to move to San Francisco. This job made that dream come true about a decade earlier than expected. The big city has not disappointed him. He loves the diversity and the city's laid-back vibe.

Armer was recently promoted to a sales position, which isn't something he expected to see himself doing — but he thinks he is well-suited for it. Going through the MIT program, you must be agile and learn things you never would have tried, he said.

It wasn't the job he envisioned in college, but it has been a wonderful opportunity.

“This program and the role I'm in are really priming me for the best foot forward.”

“I love it here ... I’m still learning every single day”

Caroline Schautteet '22

Title: Food and beverage manager

From: Belgium

Activities at MSU: Resident assistant for two years; won RA of the year

“There are so many things you learn from having good leaders”

Kylie Aulgur '21

Title: Human resources manager

From: Kansas City, Missouri

Activities at MSU: Global Leaders and Mentors, two years

“It’s opened the door to so many other opportunities”

Bryan Paige '18

Title: Senior food and beverage manager

From: Kansas City, Missouri

Activities at MSU: Bridge Springfield Brother to Brother

Caroline Schautteet has worked in restaurants since she was 15.

“It makes me happy,” she said.

Her father, a former chef, is also a Bear. Like him, when it was time to go to college, she decided to leave her homeland of Belgium and study hospitality management at Missouri State University.

“I loved it. I like the fact that the campus was really international. It was open-minded, welcoming. The teachers were super nice and more than willing to help. I have nothing but good things to say about Missouri State,” Schautteet said.

After graduation, she planned to return to Europe — but snagged the MIT scholarship.

While most MIT students join the program in pairs, she was the only one in that rotation. But once she got to San Francisco, she found a welcoming band of Bears and became close friends with Bryan Paige, who also works in food and beverage at the hotel.

Schautteet is a curious person and likes every day to be different, so this was a perfect training program for her.

“I like the fact that you can see every single department,” she said. “You learn a lot; you see different perspectives.”

The culture at the hotel is nurturing and understanding, Schautteet said.

On the weekends, she loves to explore San Francisco, a place she would not be without the MIT program. Her visa expires next year, but Schautteet is eager to find a way to stay in the U.S. with Hotel Nikko.

“I love it here,” Schautteet said. “I’m still learning every single day. I want to keep growing as much as I can.”

After graduation, Kylie Aulgur wanted to move to a big city. The MIT program gave her a perfect chance.

Even better, they made moving easy.

“You get a free place to live for the first six months, so you don’t have to stress about finding a place. You’re going to have built-in friends. That was one thing that I was worried about: ‘If I move somewhere else, I’m going to have to find my own housing, I’m not going to know anybody.’ Here, housing is provided, and they have all these other MITs from Missouri State. They have a community created for you,” she said.

Now she pays San Francisco rent prices, so she’s grateful for the time she was able to sock away money and live for free.

Although she never imagined working in a hotel, Aulgur loved the program. The opportunity to try out so many different things in such a short span is rare, she said. She completed rotations in food and beverage, marketing, revenue, sales and housekeeping.

Working at an upscale hotel taught her some of the foundations of being a professional, such as what to wear, how to speak to people and how to present yourself.

“There are so many things you learn from having good leaders, and that’s what Hotel Nikko gave me,” Aulgur said.

Aulgur has already received a promotion and now helps recruit Bears.

There are so many upsides to this program — including, Aulgur said, that it can propel a career.

“I think it helps you skip a step in your professional career when you first start out, because more likely than not, you’re not going to get a management position right out of college,” Aulgur said. “So, to be able to fast-track that and then try out all those different departments and really know what you’re looking for, that is a great opportunity.”

When Bryan Paige neared graduation, he didn’t have a job lined up. He was interested in moving to a large city.

He interviewed, earned an MIT position and moved to San Francisco.

Paige had completed the program right before COVID hit and shut down cities worldwide. Hotel Nikko didn’t fully close, but tourism was a shell of what it had been. They stayed open for business travelers.

That is when Paige was able to put his MIT program training into full force. He pivoted from food and beverage to whatever was needed.

“I did pretty much everything. I was working in security while doing a little bit of front desk and housekeeping. When things started to slowly open back up, a few food and beverage managers took on the roles of bar tending, serving, bussing, washing dishes and doing laundry,” Paige said.

There wasn’t a learning curve because he’d already experienced all these positions in the program. He was glad to keep his job at a time when layoffs in the industry were rampant.

Presutti said it was important to her for every MIT student to keep their job at that time and for her to fulfill her end of the bargain, since the graduates had already relocated to San Francisco.

Paige has thrived at the hotel: He earned Manager of the Year in 2021 and was recently awarded Leader of the Quarter. As senior food and beverage manager, he is the longest-serving MIT grad currently at Nikko.

“It’s opened the door to so many other opportunities,” Paige said. “I’ve been to Seattle, Vancouver, San Diego and D.C. I’ve always wanted to be in a bigger city and go to things like concerts, shows, comedy clubs. I love the water, the beach. There’s just so many things that I’ve always wanted to do that the program allowed me to do here.”

LIGHTNING ROUND



MEET

Cindy Schull

CPA, assistant vice president for finance and accounting for the university; controller for the Missouri State University Foundation

Grew up: In Springfield, Missouri

Education: Bachelor's in accounting, 1986, Missouri State University

Career: First worked in public accounting for about five years. Next, worked for United Way and then moved to private industry. After a decade, she returned to her alma mater to join financial services in 1998. That means Schull has spent half her life on campus!

Family: Husband Ralph, married 38 years. Two children: Dani, 31, Drew, 27. Two cats: Max and Destiny.

What do you do for Missouri State?

Financial services includes university accounting and budgeting, accounts receivable, accounts payable, the bursar's office, the procurement office and accounting for the MSU Foundation. Our area has about 50 people.

What are your favorite parts of your job?

I get to touch a little bit of everything, and I like getting to work with every area of campus.

I love being connected with the Missouri State University Foundation by working with the donors and people in the community, being able to assist in supporting the university.

I work on the back end. People in the advancement offices are the ones out there talking to the donors. What we do is make sure that once that money comes in that it is spent how it's supposed to be spent and we have everything in order.

I also really enjoy working with faculty members who have grants.

You took on the role of assistant vice president in 2023. Tell us about that.

Financial services had been an independent department for 20 years, and we moved back under administrative services, which was the

former model. I'm essentially replacing Steve Foucart, who was the chief financial officer. He retired in August. My position as the assistant vice president is one we haven't had for some time. We've been working through how it's going to look.

Would you rather be an expert in one topic or know a little bit about everything?

I lean toward knowing a little bit about everything.

Any hobbies?

We enjoy gardening. We love shows and concerts. We like to go to Juanita K. Hammons Hall and try to support the local arts.

Favorite MSU moment or memory?

Tent Theatre shows and Lady Bears games. Anytime they win, it's great!

What would be your ideal workday?

It would definitely start later than 8 a.m. I am not a morning person.

What inspires you?

Watching the students on campus. They have so much energy, and their outlook is bright. Their energy filters to us. It's also inspiring to see them graduate and go on to accomplish goals. We get to see that year after year.

Ocean, lake or pool — or not a fan of water?

I really like going to the ocean. We go to the lake sometimes.

Counting down the days to retirement, or more likely to work 10 years past retirement eligibility?

Maybe five years past retirement. Technically, I could go now, so five to 10 years past.

What advice would you give a younger you?

Make sure you enjoy life, family and friends. Don't always work.

Favorite vacation?

Curaçao (a Dutch Caribbean island). My daughter is a teacher in South Korea now, but last year she was there. We visited and went to a lot of the historical sites and museums she visited with her students. We learned about plants, art, history and all of that. We went to the aquarium. We did the glass-bottom canoe. It was a lot of fun.

Place you most want to travel? Ireland.

Read the book or watch the movie?

I would rather read the book, but I tend to watch more movies. Maybe that's a time thing.

Fill in the blank. Missouri State is: Home. ▾

NOTES OF GRATITUDE



Your gifts make it possible for Bears to thrive. These future scientists, health care providers, business leaders and more say

THANK YOU

“Thank you for making a difference in my life and in the lives of many other students who benefit from your scholarship program.”

- **Mark**, computer science and software development major with a minor in mathematics

Pete Sanderson Scholarship; Ben Parnell Endowed Scholarship for International Studies; Class of 1950 Scholarship

“Your investment in my dreams is deeply appreciated and is taken very seriously.”

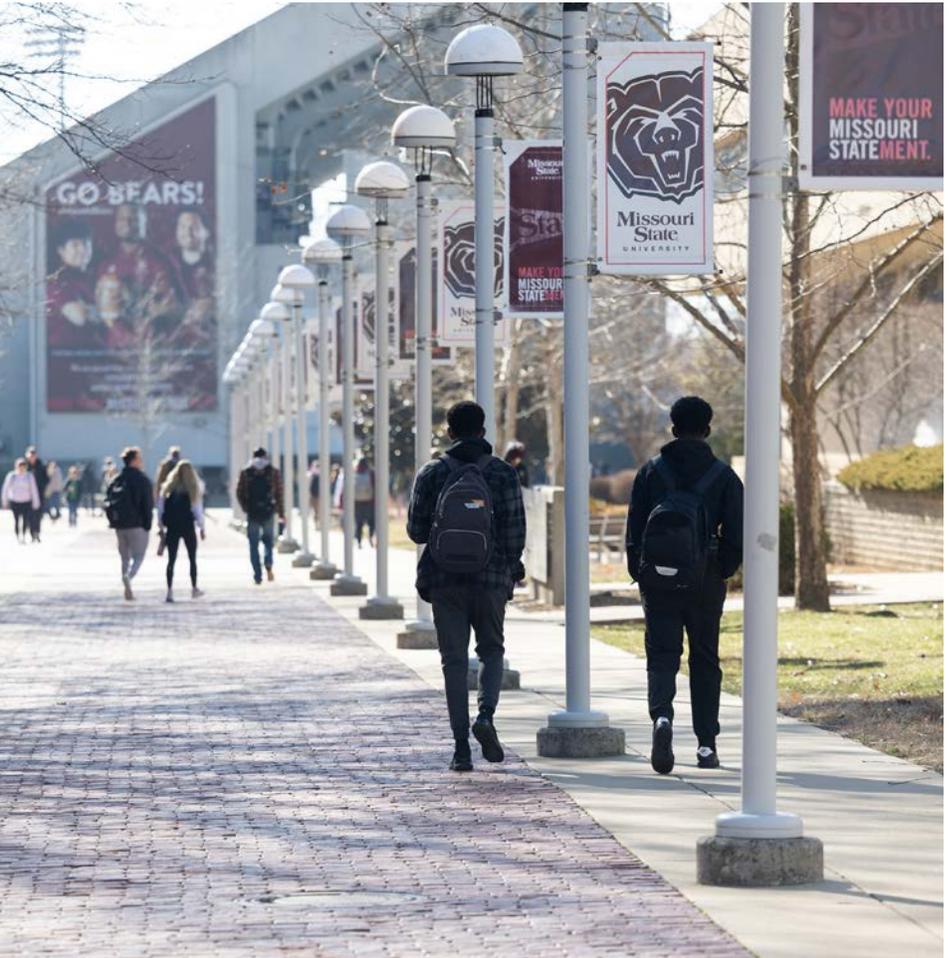
- **Jennifer**, general business major

Robert and Lynette Foster Business Scholarship; Carol D. Jones Endowed Scholarship Fund

“I am sincerely grateful, and I will use this scholarship to further my pursuit of a physics degree.”

- **Brogan**, physics major with an emphasis in astrophysics

Banks Family Scholarship



“I am really grateful for your support and was overjoyed to discover that I had been chosen for this award.”

- **Sowmya**, audiology and speech-language pathology major

Dr. Neil DiSarno Memorial Scholarship

“I am beyond grateful for the great opportunity you have provided me through this scholarship.”

- **Kamila**, animal science major with an emphasis in pre-vet

Douglas W. Darr Leadership Scholarship

THEN AND NOW

MAKE A NEW “GRAND ENTRANCE”



PHOTOS FROM MSU ARCHIVE MATERIALS

THEN: In the late 1970s and early 1980s, an estimated 3,000 pedestrians crossed Grand Street each day. They competed with about 15,639 vehicles.

MSU knew it was a safety issue, and sought a better way for Bears to get to campus from parking lot 24.

After a discussion period that lasted more than three years, a committee of students, faculty and Regents (now known as Board of Governors members) chose an underpass as the best crossing option.

Construction started in summer 1981, and the crosswalk — which was 14 feet underground, 8 feet high, 12 feet wide and 60 feet long — opened that September.

The renovated Grand Avenue underground pedestrian crosswalk is open!

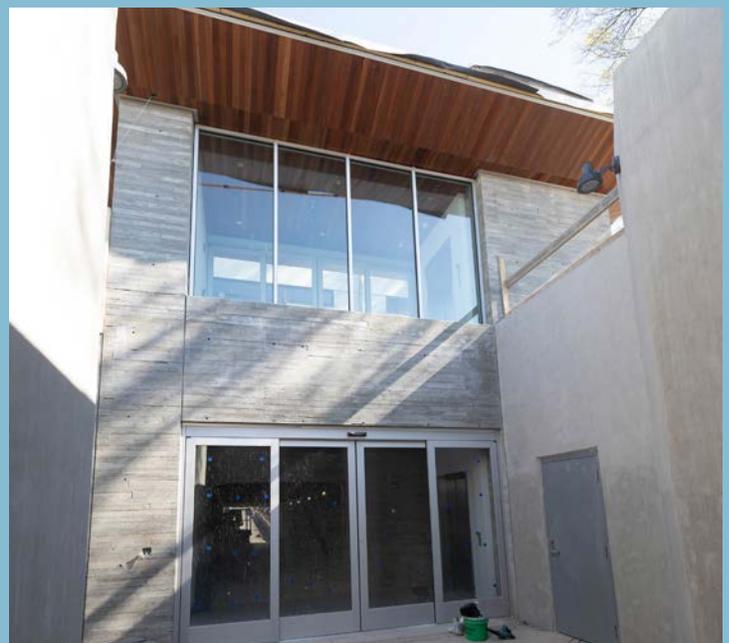
NOW: The crosswalk didn't solve all issues. It relied on stairs to descend, so it was never an option for wheelchair-bound students.

And with not a lot of attention since the early 1980s, it had also become ... well, let's just say, not aesthetically pleasing. It was an unattractive introduction to our campus for the thousands of people who attended football games, Tent Theatre and events in Ellis Hall.

We're excited that the Grand Street underground crosswalk is now fully renovated! Changes to the area began in late 2021, with support from the state and city. It was opened for use May 12, 2023.

The crosswalk is now fully accessible, with ramps and an elevator. The tunnel and nearby lot were also given a fresh look.

Let us know what you think of this "grand" new entrance!



PHOTOS BY KEVIN WHITE



Honoring and heightening **THE POWER OF WOMEN**

Bears WIN — Women’s Impact Network — is a new group of advocates who honor the impact of women by addressing some of the most pressing needs of students at MSU. They optimize time, talent and resources to turn big ideas into measurable and meaningful change.



“When women put their minds to doing something, there’s no limit to what they can accomplish.”

Jacqui Coones, executive director of prospect development

The Bears WIN advisory committee met this year to plan their strategies for advancing the university. PHOTO SUBMITTED BY STEPHANIE SMITH



MSU alumnae Marla Elliott (from left), Amy Counts and Jennifer Fitzmaurice are the chairs of the three Bears WIN committees. SUBMITTED PHOTOS

Research shows that women are the driving forces behind many philanthropic decisions, and that women’s philanthropy tends to be based on having empathy for others.

To recognize this distinct role, the Missouri State University Foundation has started the Bears WIN, or Women’s Impact Network. This initiative encourages everyone to celebrate and honor the impact of women.

Members of Bears WIN are able to give time, talent, treasure and/or testimony.

Most of all, the goal of this initiative is to make a long-lasting and positive impact on Missouri State University.

Focusing on women’s philanthropy

Two years ago, the Missouri State University Foundation began working with Kathleen Loehr, a leading national expert on women’s philanthropy.

“MSU is one of the first public schools in the Midwest to integrate women’s philanthropy across its strategies,” Loehr said. “Bears WIN is elevating all that women bring to support MSU’s students and priorities.”

Internal analysis showed women participated in giving at rates nearly equal to men, but gave at lower levels.

To better understand why women were giving at lower levels, Loehr conducted focus group discussions for alumni and friends to find out what is important to them in regard to philanthropy and at MSU.

Women noted they were involved in

the decisions for philanthropic giving and were looking for an initiative that would resonate with them.

As a result, the Bears WIN advisory committee of 19 individuals was established in 2022.

“We want to connect with alumni and friends across the country about the significant and direct effect the Bears Women’s Impact Network can and will have on Missouri State students,” said Wendy Ferguson, assistant vice president for development and strategy.

“We invite anyone who celebrates the incredible influence of women or has a passion for these initial funding priorities to join us.”

Network publicly unveiled in fall 2023

The Bears WIN initiative also provides an opportunity to give not only monetarily, but through time and talent.

The advisory committee and subcommittees meet regularly to ensure the success of this initiative, both now and into the future.

With their guidance, a mission statement was created, initial fundraising priorities were developed, a website was established and a logo was selected.

Their hard work and dedication culminated with the establishment of three new funds at the foundation and a soft launch in fall 2023.

A larger public kickoff event is planned for spring 2024.

“We knew from our research that women were engaged philanthropically,” said Jacqui Coones, executive director of prospect development. “We now have a way to give them recognition and show exactly how their collective impact makes a difference on campus.”

Bears WIN supports key areas

By 2026, Bears WIN hopes to celebrate raising awareness and at least \$500,000 for three areas that affect students from all backgrounds across the MSU system:

- **Mental wellness:** Nationwide, college students name mental wellness as a top concern. Magers Health and Wellness Center identified affordability, stigma and privacy as the primary reasons students do not seek mental-wellness care. The Bears WIN Mental Wellness Fund provides financial assistance for students seeking counseling or psychiatric services at Magers.
- **Degree completion:** The university offers a one-time grant to assist students who are experiencing circumstances that result in an outstanding balance with the university that prevents them from either continuing their enrollment, registering for a future semester or graduating from MSU. The Bears WIN Degree Completion Fund was established to assist students who have exhausted other areas of financial assistance and may not qualify for the campus grant, but still have some financial-support needs in order to complete a degree.

FOUNDATION LEADERSHIP

- **Mental wellness and neurodiversity on the West Plains campus:** In fall 2022, Missouri State University-West Plains started the ASCEND (Autism Support Can Empower New Directions) program for students on the autism disorders spectrum who are transitioning out of high school. Students in the ASCEND program receive service in academic support, executive functions development, social strategy support and daily living transitions. ASCEND encourages and fosters self-confidence, self-advocacy and growing independence while students

work toward an associate's degree. The Grizzlies WIN Mental Wellness and Neurodiversity Fund at MSU-West Plains benefits these students.

Ferguson said support for these areas will have a far-reaching effect.

"We're not just asking for money to show dollars and totals on a page. We're inviting people to join us in this effort because it will provide positive change for so many current and future students. The impact of these funds will create a meaningful difference during a time of crossroads in many students' lives." ▾



Bears WIN has a goal of raising

\$500,000

by 2026 for three new funds

WHY FOCUS ON MENTAL WELLNESS?

71%

of college students said they were struggling with stress, anxiety and depression.

50%

of college students cited their own mental health struggles as their top stressor in 2023.

Source: Inside Higher Ed



"The new Degree Completion Assistance Fund provides help to cover an unexpected situation: a student's car breaks down, they lose their job, their child is sick ... you get the picture. The fund helps keep them enrolled and on track for success. Thank you to everyone involved in making the Bears WIN program a service that truly benefits students."

Dr. Dee Siscoe, vice president for student affairs



"People like to do good things together, and when they come together, it's more powerful than going it alone. The Bears and Grizzlies WIN projects on the Springfield and West Plains campuses will bring philanthropically minded women together in powerful support of Missouri State. It will be fun to watch in the years ahead."

Dennis Lancaster, chancellor of Missouri State University-West Plains



The Bears WIN initiative includes input from people around the state and nation. They attend hybrid virtual/in-person meetings. PHOTO BY JESSE SCHEVE

Thank you to our advisory committee members!

Bears WIN is a direct result of the efforts and contributions of our talented committee members. With the support and input from these alumni, faculty, staff and friends, this initiative is set to blaze new trails at Missouri State and for the MSU Foundation.

COMMUNICATIONS COMMITTEE

Jennifer Fitzmaurice, chair
Anna Marie Presutti
Tina Stillwell
Libby Rozell
Michelle Nahon
Teresa Ollis

NETWORKING COMMITTEE

Amy Counts, chair
Ann Page
Courtney Beykirch
Gail Smart
Suzannah Pace
Tracey Hollis
Katie Hope

STAFF COMMITTEE MEMBERS

Wendy Ferguson, assistant vice president for development and strategy
Jacqui Coones, executive director of prospect development
Stephanie Smith, senior director of donor relations and special events
Rachel Peterson, director of development and annual giving-West Plains
Angi Rowe, strategic communications and content specialist

OPERATIONS COMMITTEE

Marla Elliott, chair
Bev Keltner
Rhonda Christopher
Scott Purvis
Susan Sims-Giddens
Lori Matthews

BEARS WIN

MISSOURI STATE UNIVERSITY FOUNDATION

CONTACT MISSOURI STATE UNIVERSITY STAFF AFFILIATED WITH BEARS WIN

MSUBearsWIN.org

Foundation@MissouriState.edu

417-836-4143



2023 BOARD OF TRUSTEES

Members of the Board of Trustees are some of the most exceptional supporters of Missouri State University. Trustees advise us in gift-planning, seeking private gifts and investing private funds given for university projects and programs.



Dr. H. Douglas Adams
Nita Jane Ayres
Gregory A. Beck
William K. Berry
Thomas L. Black
Judy A. Breeding
Brian Burlingame
Dr. Bonnalie Oetting Campbell
David H. Capps
Joe Carmichael
Dan Cobb
Ethel Curbow
Susan Daniel
Kenneth J. Dotson
Jacquie Dowdy
Michael J. Duggan
Karen E. Dyson
John F. Eilermann Jr.
Marla J. Elliott
Tim Foote
John D. Foster
Robert A. Foster
Larry D. Frazier
Robert C. Fulp
J. Ryan Gamble
Gary Garwitz
Martha A. Greene
Dr. Matthew A. Harthcock

Rev. Dr. Paula Hartsfield
Billy E. Hixon
Tracey J. Hollis
Karen Horny
Ret. Col. Arthur D. Hurtado
Michael H. Ingram
Gary D. Irwin
Gerald L. Jackson
Diane L. Jenkins
Morgan Perry Jones
Beverly Keltner
Jim Kendall
Gordon Kinne
W. Bryan Magers
David B. McQueary
Mark L. McQueary
Mary McQueary
Rick McQueary
Richard H. Miller
C. Michel Minor
Kyle Moles
James L. (Pete) Morgan Jr.
Timothy J. Myers
Kay Alden Nelson
Lisa C. Officer
Michael L. Oldham
Richard Ollis
Teresa Ollis

Timothy B. O'Reilly
Dr. David W. Osborne
Suzannah L. Pace
M. Ann Page
Dr. Peggy Pearl
Carol Pinegar
Anna Marie Presutti
Scott M. Purvis
William L. Rowe Jr.
Mary Hass Schrag
Patricia L. Sechler
T.J. Siebenman
Corrie Marie Sifers
Dr. Susan Sims-Giddens
Mark R. Stillwell
Tina C. Stillwell
Thomas Strong
Mary Asher Tearney
Bradley D. Thomas
Terry W. Thompson
Gary M. Tompkins
Joseph W. Turner
John E. Wanamaker
Jack E. Weimer
James H. Wilson
James B. Wingfield

MORE ABOUT THE TRUSTEES:
MissouriStateFoundation.org/Trustees

Executive committee



Mark L. McQueary
Chair



James H. Wilson
Chair elect



Judy Breeding



Bonnalie O. Campbell



Tim Foote



John D. Foster



Diane L. Jenkins



Beverly Keltner



Mary H. Schrag



L. Joseph Carmichael
Immediate past chair,
ex-officio



Clifton M. Smart III
President, Missouri State
University, ex-officio



Dr. Anson Elliott
Board of Governors, Missouri
State University, ex-officio



Aaren Muex
Alumni Association, Missouri
State University, ex-officio



W. Brent Dunn
Executive director of the
Missouri State University
Foundation, ex-officio



Cindy Schull
Treasurer, ex-officio



Cindy R. Busby
Secretary

Committee chairs



EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE
Mark McQueary



AUDIT COMMITTEE
Judy Breeding



DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE
Beverly Keltner



**FINANCE/INVESTMENT
COMMITTEE**
Diane Jenkins



GOVERNANCE COMMITTEE
James H. Wilson



STEWARDSHIP COMMITTEE
Ann Page

FACES OF THE FOUNDATION

CINDY BUSBY,

EXECUTIVE ASSISTANT TO THE VICE PRESIDENT FOR UNIVERSITY ADVANCEMENT; SECRETARY TO THE MSU FOUNDATION

CAREER

Started as an administrative assistant outside the university; joined MSU in 1985. First positions were in two dean's offices before transferring to advancement area in 1992.



You have worked for the advancement office for 31 years. What do you most want Missouri State supporters to know?

Every single day I see the importance of private giving to scholarships, programs or capital projects. Whether it's contributing time, money or something else, our alumni, donors and friends make a difference in the lives of students and that is very rewarding. Thank you for making me happy to show up every day for over three decades. What an amazing career this has been.

Along with your other roles, you are the building manager of the alumni center. That goes beyond securing rooms for meetings. What are some crazy stories?

I once had to remove a bat hanging from a ceiling tile on the second floor. I've shoveled snow and spread salt on the walkways in the winter.

We've had two semi-serious floods that involved wading through water in the basement to salvage items stored down there.

Talk about the scholarship you founded in honor of a loved one/alumna.

The Genevieve Roy Memorial Scholarship was created in memory of my mom, who was the principal's secretary at Stockton High School for 18 years until she retired.

Mom received her teaching certificate from Southwest Missouri State College (now MSU) in the early 1950s and taught in one-room schoolhouses before taking a break to raise her family. My siblings and I graduated from Stockton in 1972, '75, '76 and '80.

Mom passed away in 2005, and because of her love of students and education, we created a scholarship to assist students from Stockton who plan to attend Missouri State. The first recipients were awarded in 2012.

You're married to a Bear! Tell us about that.

My husband, Chuck Busby, received his bachelor's and master's degrees from Missouri State in 1984 and '87. We were married 40 years in September.

He has been an MSU employee since 1989 and works in the office of web strategy and development. Since we both work in the Meyer Alumni Center, we frequently ride to work together. It's probably accurate to say 70% of our conversations revolve around MSU!

Our free time is usually spent at MSU sporting events and concerts.

You said one of your most embarrassing moments happened at Hammons Field. What was it?

I have worked MSU baseball games since Hammons Field opened in 2004.

My job is running the computer in the public address suite that displays things on the video scoreboard.

The first season, on a beautiful warm night in April when the stadium and suites were nearly full, I stood up and accidentally hit the switch that turned all the lights out in the entire stadium in the middle of a Bears baseball game.

It took 18 very long minutes for them to come back on. I still have the News-Leader clipping in my desk where the sports reporter wrote about it the next day.

By the second season, the Springfield Cardinals had installed a glass plate over the switch.

What are your plans for the future?

I enjoy traveling, and my sister and I spent a week in Germany last spring, then we did a London/Norway/Scotland/Iceland cruise. This fall we went on a safari in Kenya.

I have been working full-time for 45 years, the last 38 at MSU. This has been a wonderful experience, and when you love what you do, work really doesn't feel like work.

I plan to retire in December, so this winter will include sleeping in and lots of sitting by the fireplace with a good book and a cat on my lap. When that gets old, I will figure out a way to still be a part of Missouri State in some capacity — once a Bear, always a Bear! ▾

Advancement staff



Debbie Branson

Director of
Foundation Relations

DebbieBranson@MissouriState.edu



Michaela Bennett

Assistant Director of College
and Constituency Engagement

MichaelaBennett@MissouriState.edu



Scott Carter

Director of Development

ScottCarter@MissouriState.edu



Jacqui Coones

Executive Director of
Prospect Development

JacquiCoones@MissouriState.edu



Kerry Dickerson

Senior Director of
Athletics Development

KerryDickerson@MissouriState.edu



Katie Dudden

Assistant Director of Donor
and Alumni Relations,
MSU-West Plains

KatieDudden@MissouriState.edu



W. Brent Dunn

Vice President for
University Advancement

BrentDunn@MissouriState.edu



Greg Fansler

Executive Director of
Engagement and
Alumni Relations

GFansler@MissouriState.edu



Wendy Ferguson

Assistant Vice President for
Development and Strategy

*WendyFerguson@
MissouriState.edu*



Arianna Gardner

Assistant Director of
Student and Young
Alumni Engagement

AriannaGardner@MissouriState.edu



Paige Grisham

Director of
Athletics Development

PaigeGrisham@MissouriState.edu



Alison Harper

Director of Annual Funds

AlisonHarper@MissouriState.edu



Cindy Howell

Director of Development

CindyHowell@MissouriState.edu



Lindsey McDaniel

Assistant Director of
Prospect Development

LindseyMcDaniel@MissouriState.edu



Kelsey Menefee

Director of Donor Relations
and Special Events

KelseyMenefee@MissouriState.edu



Beth Nichols

Assistant Director, Chapter
and Corporate Engagement

BethNichols@MissouriState.edu



Rachel Peterson

Director of Development and
Annual Giving MSU - West
Plains

RachelPeterson@MissouriState.edu



Angela Pinegar

Assistant Director of
Advancement Services

AngiePinegar@MissouriState.edu



Sarah Riley

Director of Development

SarahRiley@MissouriState.edu



Angela Rowe

Strategic Communications
and Content Specialist

AngelaFrizzell@MissouriState.edu



Karl Schmidt

Executive Director of Major
and Planned Giving

KarlSchmidt@MissouriState.edu



Natalie Seever

Business Process and
Reporting Analyst-
Advancement

NatalieSeever@MissouriState.edu



Stephanie Smith

Senior Director of Donor
Relations and Special Events

StephanieSmith@MissouriState.edu



Jo Spurrier

Director of Leadership
Annual Giving

JoSpurrier@MissouriState.edu



Yulia Whittington

Director of Development

YuliaWhittington@MissouriState.edu

Cindy Busby

Executive Assistant to the Vice
President and Building Manager

Kimberly Clark

Document and
Report Specialist

Alex Cochran

Administrative Assistant II

Amy Daniels

Foundation Senior
Accounting Analyst

Mike Ferguson

Building Foreman

Debra Goodwin

Administrative Assistant III

Don Hendrickson

Advancement Applications
and Data Analyst

Marla Fritz

Administrative Assistant II

Kathy Miller

Records Supervisor

Barbie Penn

Administrative Specialist II

Malinda L. Piilola

Administrative Specialist II

Cindy Schull

Director - Grants and
Foundation Accounting

Kelly Smulczynski

Administrative Assistant II

Debbie Underwood

Foundation Senior
Accounting Analyst

Robin Wilson

Administrative Assistant II

Missouri State University Foundation

300 S. Jefferson Ave., Suite 100
Springfield, MO 65806



Thank you for supporting Giving Day 2023. **GET READY FOR 2024!**

During our annual 36-hour Giving Day, alumni and friends show their support for departments, programs, organizations and athletic teams. The collective impact of Bears around the world is amplified through outreach by ambassadors, as well as matching and challenge gifts from donors. Thank you to all who participated in 2023 and helped us shatter the previous record!



Mark your calendar to participate and be an ambassador!

MARCH 5-6, 2024

GivingDay.MissouriState.edu
