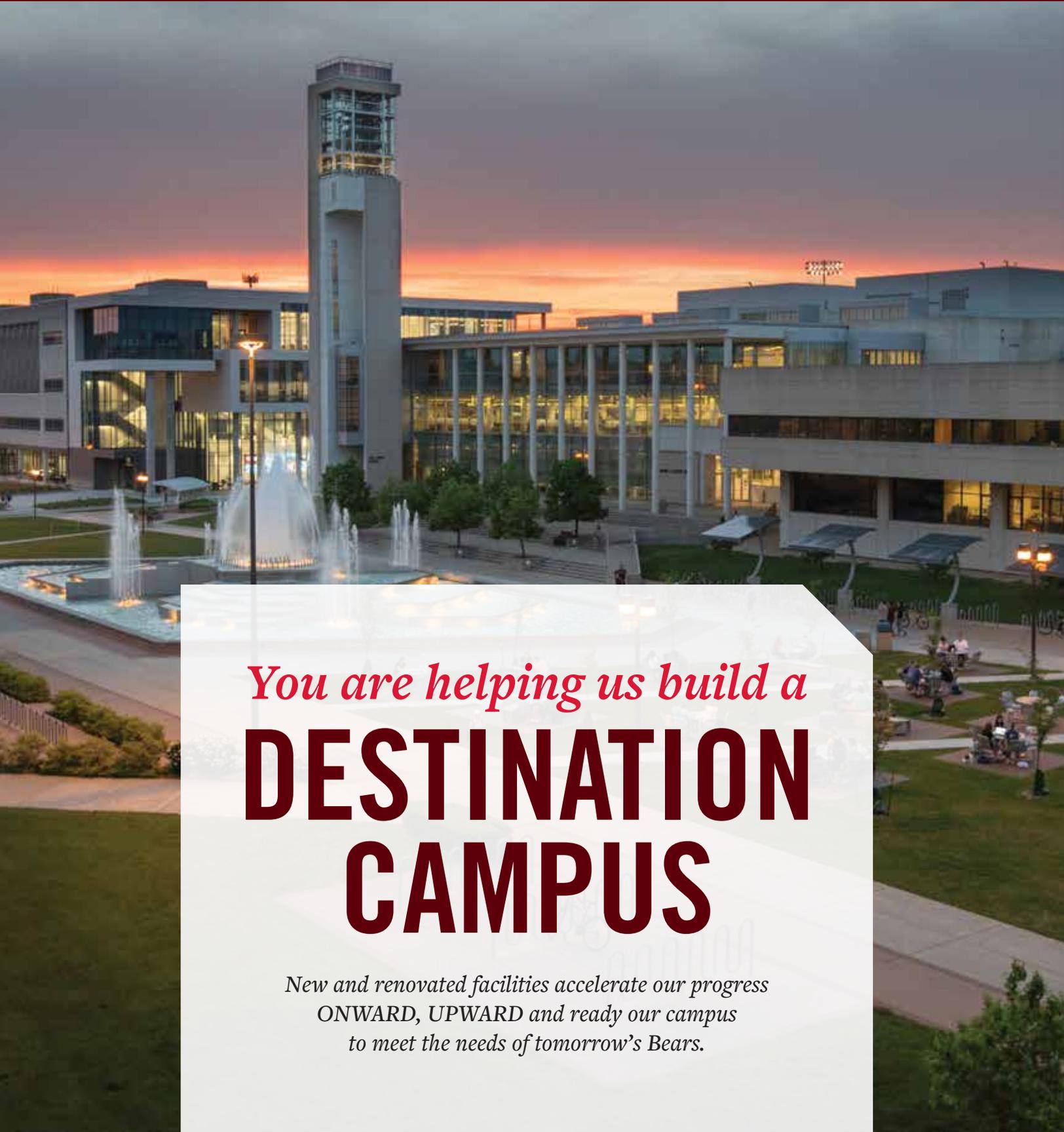


# ADVANCEMENTS

A PUBLICATION OF THE MISSOURI STATE UNIVERSITY FOUNDATION | FALL 2021



*You are helping us build a*  
**DESTINATION  
CAMPUS**

*New and renovated facilities accelerate our progress  
ONWARD, UPWARD and ready our campus  
to meet the needs of tomorrow's Bears.*

# ADVANCEMENTS

FALL 2021

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**Missouri State University  
Foundation**

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Debbie Branson, interim director of alumni relations, is an alumna whose passion is connecting other graduates back to Missouri State.



## BRENT'S CORNER

# EXTRAORDINARY PRIVATE SUPPORT HAS TRANSFORMED THIS UNIVERSITY

*Campus has changed so much since I earned my bachelor's and master's degrees here in .... well, a little while ago.*

As a proud alumnus, I walk around and think: This campus is amazing.

You may have played a role in our new buildings and upgrades. If so, we can't thank you enough.

As each project wraps up, we plan for more improvements. As we create a campus that is second-to-none — which is our goal — we give students and educators the spaces they need for learning, teaching and research.

We can offer the ultimate Missouri State experience.

We want academic, residential and athletic facilities that are useful, beautiful, comfortable, high-tech, accessible and sustainable.

It's an ambitious vision. We consider you our partner in this vision.

It is always Missouri State's goal to avoid placing the burden of paying for projects mostly on our students. State support does not cover all campus needs. We also look to university reserves, bonds and grants.

However, the bulk of recent construction has been made possible by supporters who see a need and help us fulfill it. This has allowed the university to reach new levels, move onward and upward, and do things we couldn't do otherwise.

What a humbling privilege it has been for me to see the level of support you have given us.

I hope this issue of Advancements moves you to support a capital project of your choice.

Here's to more ground-breakings, construction cranes, dedications and ribbon-cuttings in our future!

**W. Brent Dunn**

*Vice president for university advancement and executive director of the Missouri State University Foundation*

## 5 INTERESTING PLACES ON CAMPUS YOU MAY NOT KNOW ABOUT

*Even if you're a Missouri State expert, there are places you may not have come across.*

### THE TUNNELS.

When you're on campus, do you ever think about what's under you?

We have almost two miles of underground tunnels that help provide power, data, heat and cooling, using electrical, steam and water lines, to multiple buildings.

The tunnels have different access points throughout campus, and some past Bears figured out those access points.

In the 1960s, the Women's Dorm, now Wells House, was subject to a "haunting" one winter. The Standard reported that "ghosts" would use the tunnels to sneak into the women's dorm. One night the "ghosts" were caught when there was a fire alarm, and it was found that those doing the haunting were actually residents of the men's dorm.

### THE CADAVER LAB IN THE McQUEARY FAMILY HEALTH SCIENCES HALL.

You are probably either saying "yikes" or "cool" right now, depending on your personality.

Health and human services students need rigorous, hands-on

experiences before they can treat patients.

To help them study the human body, we have a lab with cadavers. There, our students learn about anatomy and physiology. The cadavers are concealed in tables, and students can raise them up when they do dissection work.

So, when people talk about donating their body to science — that's real!

### THE REMNANTS OF HISTORY IN HILL HALL.

Hill Hall is one of the three original buildings on campus.

It was completed in 1924, and was the first Missouri State facility built exclusively for classrooms.

Dr. Clyde Milton Hill, president of the university from 1918-26, gave input into its design. Hill Hall became a model for similar classroom buildings across the country.

When Hill was new, it had a full-sized gymnasium — where the Bears basketball team played until 1940 — and a swimming pool.

From 1924 to 1966, Greenwood Laboratory School, the K-12 school at MSU, was in Hill.

The building was fully renovated in 2018. It is the home of the College of Education and the department of psychology.

The space that once held a pool is now a renovated first-floor study lounge and computer lab.

You can still see some pieces of the past,

however. The old basketball gym floor is visible in the basement mechanical room.

### THE FIRING RANGE.

Did you know there's an indoor firing range in one of our facilities that supports the recreational needs of students, faculty and staff members?

The range in Hammons Student Center is used for military science courses that teach pistol and rifle marksmanship.

It's also used by the MSU Marksman Team, for law-enforcement officers training courses and weapons-safety classes open to the community.

### THE VAULT IN THE KENNETH E. MEYER ALUMNI CENTER.

I told you in the last issue of Advancements that the home of the Missouri State University Foundation is in a former Boatman's National Bank building in downtown Springfield.

What you may not know is that we are one of the best places in town to be in the event of a tornado.

We still have the bank's sturdy vault in the basement of our building. We keep archival materials in the vault, including historic issues of the Ozarko yearbook, the Standard newspaper and the Missouri State alumni magazine.

Take it from me, if you're ever visiting the vault: Don't shut the door behind you! ▼

Encourage scholars and athletes to reach the highest levels of performance.  
Give all Bears the spaces they deserve.  
Enhance the entire Missouri State experience.

**You do this and more when you give to capital support.**

*You help us build a*

# DESTINATION CAMPUS

WRITTEN BY MICHELLE S. ROSE



**“We have taken great strides to improve facilities over the past several years. Our work is not done, and we will continue to enhance the campus. But the real story is the people behind the buildings. We are thankful for the supporters who believed in Missouri State enough to ensure the university’s future. The entire campus community now enjoys amazing facilities made possible by generous support. We hope more progress is to come, and that you want to be a part of our next vision for Missouri State.”**

— CLIF SMART, MISSOURI STATE UNIVERSITY PRESIDENT



*When you step onto any campus, you get a sense of life at that place.*

In the competitive world of higher education, those first impressions are critical.

What does it take to create a university that is more than stone and steel, mortar and masonry?

How can we display an optimistic, energetic feeling — one that matches the intellectual and social activities that take place here?

We should have a physical presence that matches our mission. We must invigorate our current facilities, and thoughtfully plan and build the facilities that will carry us into the future.

Because of generous donors like you, we have been able to invest in our campus in recent years. We have changed the face of the university, and more improvements are on the way.

### **WHY ARE GIFTS OF CAPITAL SUPPORT SO IMPORTANT TO MISSOURI STATE?**

The right facilities help us improve teaching, learning, recruiting and the entire Missouri State experience.

They give students and faculty members the tools, technologies and state-of-the-art classrooms they need and deserve.

Great architecture and spaces lead to great outcomes. For example, studies have shown the more natural light you can bring

into a classroom, the better test scores are for students.

Missouri State is dedicated to improving facilities because the campus experience matters so much to the potential students, faculty and staff we want to recruit and retain.

Because of a shrinking pool of possible college students nationwide, MSU faces stiff competition. The look and feel of a campus helps students decide where they want to attend.

Fantastic facilities also raise our profile as a major university.

### **WHY IS NOW A GREAT TIME TO SUPPORT CAPITAL PROJECTS?**

Universities must change and adapt to meet the needs of tomorrow's students.

We have been blessed with private support that has allowed us to enhance some of our spaces.

However, we still have buildings that have waited years for improvements. Modernizing these facilities is a critical ingredient in our growth.

We are excited to do more, and we need your help. We believe Missouri State can create a campus that is second-to-none. We dream of giving all Bears the spaces they deserve, in every corner of campus.

When you give to facilities, you build our future. Thank you!

# **ONWARD UPWARD**

## **FACILITIES PRIORITIES FOR THE ONWARD, UPWARD CAMPAIGN**

Our buildings are places where students become illuminated by new ideas, practice real-world skills and make lifelong friends. You can help us expand in important, student-centered ways.

These are some of our capital priorities for Onward, Upward.

They have been carefully selected to move Missouri State forward for decades to come.

However, this campaign isn't just about our vision. We want your input. If you have ideas about facilities, feel free to contact us.

### **Proposed priorities:**

- A show-cattle barn at the Darr Agricultural Center, with classroom space and student housing space.
- A classroom and equipment-storage facility at the Kindrick Family Farm.
- Additional support for the new John Goodman Amphitheatre, the permanent home for Tent Theatre located in the new Judith Enyeart Reynolds Arts Park.
- Renovations to Kemper Hall, including new classrooms, program offices and faculty/ staff work areas.
- Renovations to the information technology and cybersecurity lab in Glass Hall.
- Renovations to science facilities to ensure high-quality laboratory equipment, technology and supplies.
- Expansion of the IDEA Commons. In the 2000s, Missouri State leaders had a vision. We wanted to redevelop a portion of Springfield's center city. With the help of city and local government, more than a decade later we have created an

*Continued on page 9*

*How your generosity has shaped MSU:*

# STORIES OF RECENT DONOR-SUPPORTED FACILITIES



## The Betty & Bobby Allison Event Center at Greenwood Laboratory School

Missouri State University and Greenwood Laboratory School dedicated the Betty & Bobby Allison Event Center in November 2020.

A lead gift from Bobby Allison, gifts from more than 100 Greenwood alumni and friends, as well as state appropriations, paid for the \$6.4 million project. Its 23,000-square-foot design includes a multipurpose gymnasium and performance stage.

"This is such a big day in Greenwood's history," Dr. Janice Duncan, former director of Greenwood, said. "We're so grateful to have this space that will help our students get the very most from their education and experience here."

At 10,500 square feet, the new

gymnasium is about 38% larger than its predecessor. Seating includes 290 retractable seats, 322 bleacher seats and 250 folding chair seats.

The gymnasium features a divider curtain with cross-court basketball goals. It serves as a multipurpose space that includes a large stage and motorized projection screen for viewing multimedia presentations.

New facilities also include a weight room, concessions stand, restrooms and corridor that connects to the science laboratory. The gymnasium is adjacent to a locker room addition that was added in 2018.

The facilities were named for Bobby Allison, a long-standing friend of the university, and his late mother, Betty.





## The Robert Gourley Student Success Center in David D. Glass Hall

When Missouri State University held the groundbreaking ceremony for the David D. Glass Hall expansion in 2015, the name Robert Gourley became permanently linked with the College of Business.

A significant gift from Gourley, his wife Marlese and their family made the 37,000-square-foot Robert Gourley Student Success Center addition possible.

Missouri State honored the Gourleys, longtime friends and supporters of the university, with the Bronze Bear award at a commencement ceremony held in fall 2020.

“Our College of Business is one of the largest in the Midwest. It offers a top-accredited education and has extensive connections to the business community and corporate world,” said President Clif Smart.

“Thanks to Robert and Marlese Gourley, our facilities now reflect that.”

Robert Gourley was born in Detroit, Michigan, and spent his formative years in Mountain Grove, Missouri. He earned a bachelor’s degree in business organization and management from Missouri State in 1960.

Marlese, a retired educator, is an alumna of the University of Missouri.

After enlisting and serving in the U.S. Army, Gourley went on to a successful career in sales and entrepreneurship.

He and Marlese later moved into ownership of several different businesses, including a beverage distributorship, photo-developing and camera stores, and a startup bank in Kansas City.

Through the years, they’ve often given to support higher education initiatives, athletics and scholarships.



**“When I got into the business community, I found out I had the knowledge to compete, and to compete well ... I’m just very proud of this organization.”**

ROBERT GOURLEY, '60  
*Entrepreneur and businessman*

### NAMED SPACES IN GLASS HALL

- David D. Glass Family Executive Board Room
- Robert Gourley Student Success Center
- O'Reilly Auto Parts Grand Atrium
- American National Insurance Auditorium
- BKD, LLP and BKD Wealth Advisors, LLC Trading Lab
- Central Bank and Central Trust of the Ozarks Café
- The Marlin Think Tank for Creative Thinking in Business
- Sunderland Foundation Center for Academic and Professional Success
- Jack E. Weimer and Family Graduate Programs Office
- Tim Foote and Mike Oldham Families Peak Performance Sales Lab
- Jim and Pat Jones Reception and Meeting Room
- McDonald Student Entrepreneurship Lab
- Thomas Allen E. Allen School of Accountancy Suite and Conference Room
- Joe F. Carroll Family Technology Center
- Kevin and Marla Elliott Family Executive Classroom
- Joseph Daniel Delp Marketing Department Office Suite and the Hammons Black Walnuts Conference Room
- Bill and Heather Perry Executive Classroom
- Jim Wilson Student Collaboration Zone
- Tim Foote Family Outdoor Terrace
- Scott and Jennifer Huff Team Meeting Rooms
- Ollis Family Study Away Office
- Jon and Jo Baker Team Meeting Room
- Trevor J. Crist Entrepreneurial Terrace
- Scott and Allison Salmon Team Meeting Room
- Bruce and Diane Jenkins Interview Room
- John E. and Lori K. Wanamaker Interview Room
- Nancy and Randy Allen Collaboration Area
- Dave and Gail Meinert Team Room
- Steve and Jane Parker Team Room
- Bullock Family Collaboration Area
- Robin and Jim Robeson Collaboration Area
- Dr. Elizabeth Rozell and The Honorable David Rush Collaboration Area
- Bradley Thomas Collaboration Areas



## The Ann Kampeter Health Sciences Hall

On Oct. 2, 2020, the Missouri State University Foundation unveiled a new name for what had been known as the Professional Building: the Ann Kampeter Health Sciences Hall.

It is named in recognition of a major gift from alumna Ann Kampeter.

It is a facility used by Missouri State's McQueary College of Health and Human Services, which prepares students to fill pressing needs in the community.

"These students are motivated to make a difference," said Missouri State President Clif Smart.

"By improving facilities, we

are investing in the future of health care."

Health care professionals are in strong demand, and it's imperative that MSU can provide leading-edge training.

"This building is about 75 years old, and much of the space is outdated. Frankly, much of the space is inadequate," Smart said at the naming announcement.

Renovations began as soon as the new name was announced, and are expected to be finalized this fall.

The renovations taking place in the building include:

- A student success and advisement center.

"Right now, we've got advisors everywhere," said MCHHS Dean Dr. Mark A. Smith. This creates a centrally located hub. "When you walk in, you're going to find a one-stop shop for student support."

- Meeting and study spaces. "We are going to create spaces for students to feel at home," Smith said. These will be places where students can work, collaborate, communicate via Zoom or other technology and otherwise interact and learn.
- Updates to the Speech, Language and Hearing Clinic. This clinic serves the community. It provides

evaluation and treatment for all ages in the areas of speech-language pathology and audiology.

It also provides early intervention for children who are deaf or hard of hearing. Missouri State University students get hands-on experiences at the clinic.

"Ann was a graduate of the communication sciences and disorders program, and part of this donation is to help us reshape the clinic, an outward-facing connection to the community," Smith said. "It's going to be a state-of-the-art area where the public can feel comfortable."



### WHAT'S IN THE ANN KAMPETER HEALTH SCIENCES HALL?

The building houses the:

- Biomedical sciences department.
- Communication sciences and disorders department.
- School of Nursing.
- Department of public health and sports medicine.
- Speech, Language and Hearing Clinic.
- Child Development Center.
- Preschool for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing.



## Hass-Darr Hall on the West Plains campus

Hass-Darr Hall officially opened in September 2018 on the West Plains campus.

The 18,000-square-foot facility, which once served as the West Plains Post Office, is now considered the heart of the campus.

It houses services that are crucial to student learning and academic success.

These include the Darr Honors Program, the Carol Silvey Student Union, the Drago College Store, admissions' Welcome Center, the Veterans Center, the student life and development office, tutoring services and other classroom and administrative space.

Hass-Darr Hall plays an important role in enhancing the student experience in West Plains, continuing to increase retention and graduation rates,

and developing the profile of the campus.

The facility is named in recognition of significant gifts from two families who are long-time university supporters:

- The Hass family, including Mary Hass Sheid, Judge William R. and Jeanne Hass, Judge William T. Hass, and Tim and Missy Hass Myers.
- William and Virginia Darr.

Missouri's governor and legislators also made Hass-Darr Hall possible: Some of the project was funded through Missouri's higher education bonding package.

Hass-Darr Hall has been recognized for its design. It was the recipient of a 2019 Design Excellence Citation from the American Institute of Architects-Kansas City.

*Continued from page 5*

area that celebrates and encourages Innovation, Design, Entrepreneurship and Art. That's why we call it IDEA Commons. IDEA Commons brings together corporations, the university, lofts, nonprofits and retail space. It's a downtown community where people live, shop, learn, create and work.

A new, planned expansion will be a transformational project for both Springfield and Missouri State University.

This project involves a 30,000 square foot expansion of the Roy Blunt Jordan Valley Innovation Center.

The expansion also involves a new parking garage, central green space and a private technology-focused office building to be completed by The Vecino Group as a public-private development.

The project will also include an outdoor rooftop event space at the Robert W. Plaster Free Enterprise Center. This will overlook the new central green space.

In addition, there are plans to expand the efactory. This expansion will include a conference and event space for programs related to entrepreneurship. This efactory indoor space will support events of 300+ attendees, and will be connected to the rooftop space referenced above. This space will be used for numerous efactory, university and community events.

- An indoor practice facility for athletics. Bad weather often means loss of practice time for our athletic teams and for groups such as the Pride Marching Band and ROTC. Constructing an indoor facility would ensure our students get the maximum amount of time to prepare. This facility would serve more than 1,000 MSU athletes, performing groups and sports teams.
- Naming of the arena. Our basketball and special events arena in the heart of campus is the home of the Bears and Lady Bears basketball teams. The arena is widely considered the best of its kind in the Missouri Valley Conference. We are seeking

*Continued on page 11*



## The John Goodman Amphitheatre and the Judith Enyeart Reynolds Arts Park

Missouri State University broke ground April 8 on the John Goodman Amphitheatre, part of the Judith Enyeart Reynolds Arts Park.

The amphitheatre, the new permanent home for Tent Theatre, will be in the plaza adjacent to Craig Hall. It and other upgrades will transform this outdoor area.

The open-air facility will include a stage and

tiers for 350 removable seats. Improvements will also be made to the landscape and hardscape that surround the structure.

“This structure and surrounding arts park will help support student learning across all academic programs,” said Dr. Shawn Wahl, dean of the Judith Enyeart Reynolds College of Arts and Letters.

The amphitheatre is

expected to be done in time for the Tent Theatre season in summer 2022.

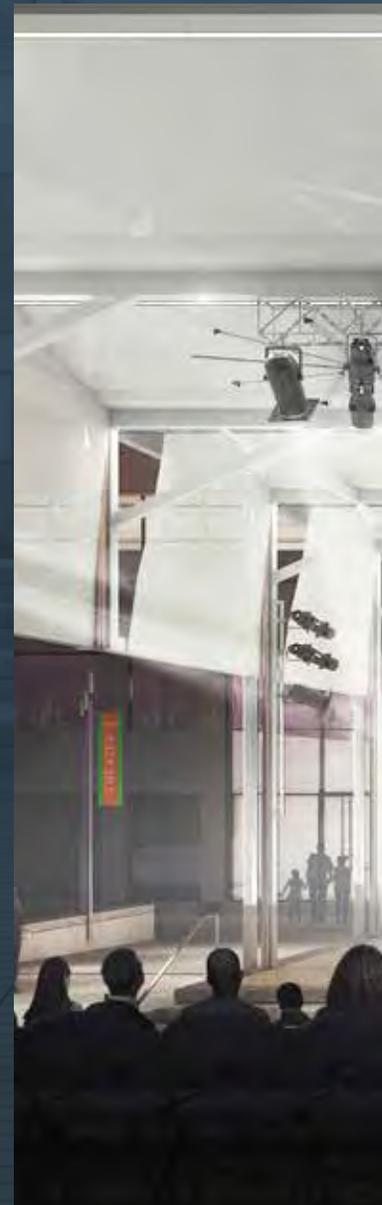
“This new arts park and permanent amphitheatre are much-welcome additions to our historic Tent Theatre,” Missouri State President Clif Smart said. “Our campus and larger community will have a vibrant and comfortable space to enjoy not only Tent Theatre and other productions, but also

many special events for years to come.”

Fundraising for the project continues, said Brent Dunn, executive director of the Missouri State Foundation.

A \$500 gift can name an individual seat in the amphitheatre.

Other naming opportunities also exist for the grand entrance, stage house, overhead fans and more.





**“The nights in Springfield, in the summer doing Tent Theatre, for me are unmatched anywhere else on Earth.”**

**JOHN GOODMAN, '75**

*Actor and chairman of Onward, Upward:  
The Campaign for Missouri State University*



Continued from page 9

a permanent name to showcase this exceptional facility and the many events it hosts for the region.

- Support for the Multicultural and Diversity Center, a dynamic and inclusive place that supports all students in their academic and personal journeys. Having a dedicated center in one location on campus will be a positive step to creating a community.
- Outdoor study and green space for the Ozarks Studies Institute. The institute, part of Missouri State University libraries, is a unique resource. Its goal is to preserve the heritage of the Ozarks. The institute is a multidisciplinary effort that stretches across the university and beyond. The Ozarks Studies Institute would like to have an outdoor space that encourages meetings, discussions and study opportunities.
- Support for an eSports space. eSports is a form of competition using video games. In eSports, multiplayer video games (such as Fortnite and League of Legends) are played competitively in front of spectators. Top eSports tournaments draw audiences that rival the biggest traditional sporting events. Universities around the globe now have eSports teams that compete on behalf of their schools. With a dedicated eSports space in Plaster Student Union, students can be given a platform to hone their skills and share their interest with others.
- Renovations and repair to the military science department's academic facilities, including the rappel tower.
- GOCAT support on the West Plains campus. This campus has partnered with community stakeholders and local industries to form the Greater Ozarks Center for Advanced Technology, or GOCAT. Through the GOCAT,

Continued on page 13





# ARCHITECTURAL STYLES ON OUR CAMPUS

Not all Missouri State buildings look the same. We have an eclectic collection that ties together, thanks to some style controls. For example, the roof on Strong Hall mimics the one on Carrington Hall. Some materials and looks are standardized — we have a lot of limestone — and some change due to building needs, sustainability practices and current trends. Some styles on campus:



## CLASSICAL:

- Carrington Hall
- Hill Hall
- Siceluff Hall

## ART DECO:

- McDonald Arena

## INTERNATIONAL:

- Pummill Hall

## MID-CENTURY MODERN:

- Cheek Hall
- Ellis Hall

## BRUTALISM:

- Temple Hall

## MODERNISM:

- Davis-Harrington Welcome Center
- Foster Family Recreation Center



Continued from page 11



MSU offers technical training programs in electronics and electricity, machining, CAD/CAM, PLCs, hydraulics, pneumatics and more.

MSU has partnered with employers to offer three apprenticeship programs. We plan to add six more apprenticeship programs in the near future.

We also plan to construct a level-three advanced welding technology lab to meet a regional and statewide workforce need for skilled welders.

Missouri State seeks funding to support registered apprenticeships, GOCAT equipment/operations and the addition of an advanced welding technology lab.



## HOW WILL WE GROW IN THE FUTURE?

Explore visioning guides for the Springfield, Mountain Grove and West Plains campuses.

 [Architect.MissouriState.edu/OurVision](https://Architect.MissouriState.edu/OurVision)



## Want to support a facility of your choice?

Talk with us about your vision for the future of Missouri State!

 [Foundation@MissouriState.edu](mailto:Foundation@MissouriState.edu)

 417-836-4143

 [MissouriStateFoundation.org](https://MissouriStateFoundation.org)

# POWERFUL PROGRESS:

*We held dedications for  
several new spaces*

*“We love dedications,  
because that  
means we have  
growth at our  
institution. We’re  
adding things for  
our students and our  
faculty that  
make the  
educational  
experience  
even better.”*

Brent Dunn, president of the  
Missouri State University  
Foundation and vice president for  
University Advancement



The Ozarks Education Center is near Missouri State University's Bull Shoals Field Station. Visitors who attended the dedication were able to tour the center (above and left) and Chase Studios (right). Terry Chase gave the land that made the construction of the center possible.

PHOTOS BY JESSE SCHEVE

## Ozarks Education Center

*Conservation and ecological research require observation over time.*

The newly constructed Ozarks Education Center near Missouri State University's Bull Shoals Field Station provides better amenities for completing such observation.

The research facility's 4,000 square feet property offers a central location for education and ecological research conducted by Missouri State faculty and students, other universities and nonprofit organizations.

The center hosted a dedication event June 25 to celebrate the facility's opening.

"We're grateful to have the new Ozarks Education Center property available for research and discovery. The land includes a number of features of interest to biology, geology, chemistry and geography faculty and students," said Dr. Tamera Jahnke, dean of MSU's College of Natural and Applied Sciences. "More importantly, this new facility and land will allow for long-term research projects."

### MAKING IT POSSIBLE

The significant contributions of several donors made the new center's construction possible:

- Terry Chase, an artist and scientist who has served as an adjunct professor at MSU, gifted the land as part of the Onward, Upward campaign.
- The Missouri General Assembly, particularly former Senator David Sater

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and former Representative Lyle Rowland, appropriated state funds to construct the building.

### ABOUT THE CONSTRUCTION

The Ozarks Education Center is located near Cedar Creek, Missouri.

The facility includes sleeping and bathing quarters, a dining center, classroom space and room for program activities.

It also has two special features: a breezeway called a dogtrot and three bunkhouses separate from the main building.

The bunkhouses, with sleeping quarters, allow researchers visiting the center to have a more meaningful and richer engagement with the site.

The new construction has already been recognized for its quality features. Its awards include:

- AIA Springfield's 2020 Honor Award, Excellence in Design.
- AIA Kansas 2020 Honor Award, Excellence in Design.
- AIA Central States 2020 Merit Award, Excellence in Design.



(Above) There are bunk beds for researchers inside the Ozarks Education Center, and three bunkhouses with beds outside of the center as well.

(Left) Terry Chase and his team at Chase Studio make natural history exhibits that are shown in museums around the world. Here, he gives an MSU group a tour of one of the areas of his studio.

PHOTOS BY JESSE SCHEVE

*More great news:*  
**Foundation surpasses  
\$25 million in gifts  
in FY21**

# Engineering program expansion

*Engineers take on big challenges and make a difference for society.*

They are involved in everything from designing safe buildings to minimizing pollution and making sure we have power. The bottom line: Engineers solve problems.

Missouri State University offers engineering education in cooperation with the Missouri University of Science and Technology.

This means:

- MSU offers the nonengineering courses.
- S&T offers the engineering courses.
- All of the classes are taught on the Missouri State University campus.
- Graduates' diplomas come from Missouri S&T.

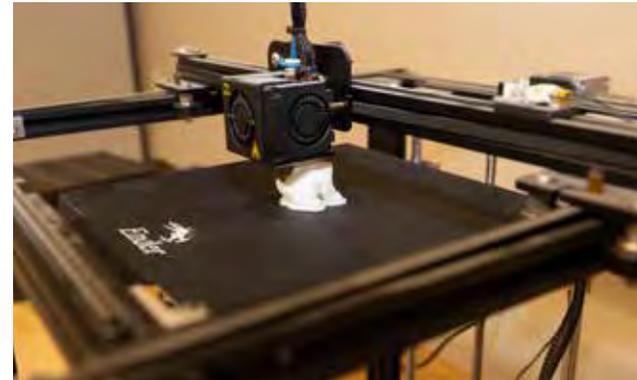
We offer three degrees: civil, electrical and mechanical engineering. We also offer

a pre-engineering program. Each of these is open to any Missouri State student.

The cooperative engineering program is housed in the Robert W. Plaster Free Enterprise Center.

Recently, we were able to expand an area of the center for this program. The expansion includes new design and research labs, distance-learning classrooms and tutoring rooms.

A dedication was held Sept. 9. ▾



(Left) Engineering instructors were at the dedication for the facilities at the Robert W. Plaster Free Enterprise Center.

(Top) Guy Mace is one of the supporters of this project. Here, he's next to the sign for the Guy Mace Lab for Mechanical Engineering.

PHOTOS BY KEVIN WHITE

## The Missouri State University Foundation has set yet another fundraising record.

The foundation raised more than \$25.8 million in Fiscal Year 21 (which ran July 1, 2020 to June 30, 2021), thanks to the

generosity of the university's alumni and friends.

This is an increase of more than \$3.1 million from the last record, set in FY20.

"It's amazing but not surprising that we set this record

during the pandemic," said MSU President Clif Smart. "Our folks always come through when our students need them the most."

The gifts came from 19,120 donors, which is an increase in overall donors and alumni donors

compared to FY20, noted Brent Dunn, executive director of the MSU Foundation.

"More people wanting to contribute and stay engaged allows us to do so much more for our students," Dunn said.



JOIN US OCT. 15-16

# HERE'S TO 100 YEARS!

*This year marks the 100th anniversary  
of Homecoming on our campus.*

*We will celebrate Bears past,  
present and future!*

Get full details about events, including where and when they will be happening:



**MissouriState.edu/  
Homecoming**



## ALUMNI REUNIONS AND OTHER SPECIAL EVENTS

- 50-year anniversary celebration for classes of 1970 and 1971
- Golden Bears Luncheon for graduates of 50+ years ago
- Black Alumni Council bi-annual meeting and gathering
- Student Government Association 100th anniversary celebration
- Basketball scrimmage

## HOMECOMING SIGNATURE EVENTS

### Friday, Oct. 15

- Faculty and staff Wall of Fame induction ceremony
- Chili Cook-Off
- Missouri Public Affairs Hall of Fame induction ceremony and banquet

### Saturday, Oct. 16

- Band of Bears Homecoming Parade
- Breakfast with Boomer
- BearFest Village tailgate (check out the Alumni Association tent!)
- Football: Bears versus Indiana State

## Can't make it to campus? Try Homecoming@Home!

Request your **FREE Homecoming@Home kit, filled with loads of virtual and downloadable fun.**

- Get a Homecoming playlist to set the mood for your in-home party.
- Try some Bear-themed tailgate recipes.
- And much more.

Request yours at our Homecoming website:  
**MissouriState.edu/  
Homecoming**



# 5 QUESTIONS *with a* CAMPAIGN CABINET MEMBER

## Anna Marie Presutti

Anna Marie Presutti's life has taken her from her hometown of Kansas City to Springfield, then all around the world.

She graduated from Missouri State in 1986 with a bachelor's in communication disorders, but spent her career in hospitality.

WRITTEN BY JULIANA GOODWIN

### Q. YOU HAVE A DEGREE IN COMMUNICATION DISORDERS, BUT YOU SPENT YOUR CAREER IN HOSPITALITY. HOW DID THAT HAPPEN?

**A.** My senior year, during spring break, my friends went to the beach and I went to the casting center at Disney World to see if I could get a job. And by the grace of God, I landed a job.

I began my career as the flight attendant on the company plane. When I started, they launched hot air balloons that were in the shape of Mickey Mouse's head or Donald Duck's head. We used to fly the balloon pilots in the private plane all around the country. We would launch the balloon with the pilot, a radio host from the area and me. As the flight attendant, I would do all the interviews for what was happening and what was new at Walt Disney World. I got catapulted very quickly into a spotlight. People took

notice, like, "Oh, this is cool. She could do this. She could do that."

In that giant machine that was Disney, I had this one unique job that was very specific. We were flying a lot of executives around, and you're in the air with somebody for eight hours, so you're talking to these people. I'm fresh out of college and I'm talking to the president of the company. I was just in the right place at the right time. I met a lot of the right people and one thing led to the next and I got a break. It was all just dumb luck and it landed me in this business.

Then I moved into the sales arena for hospitality. In sales, you're only as good as your last sale. Now you're being judged monthly: Did you make the goal? Did you exceed the goal? All of a sudden, I was being held accountable to these numbers that were going to define whether or not I was successful. Fortunately for me, I handled a couple of really cool markets. I handled sports and entertainment. I

really dug in and built great relationships with customers. It's crazy to think, but to this day the customers I had then stayed with me as I was moving on. Major League Baseball has been a big customer of mine for decades. To this day, those baseball teams stay at the Nikko.

### Q. WHAT IS YOUR PROUDEST CAREER MOMENT?

**A.** It's very nice to receive a lot of accolades and awards, but I think honestly getting through this past year gracefully and keeping the business operational. And keeping some people employed — not all, but some. I think, all in all, I've been very proud of the way I have handled this situation. I feel like I did right by people. In any business, you're dealing with people's livelihoods. That was never lost on me. So, I think I'm proud of the way that we came through this and that we did the right thing.

### Q. HOW DO YOU GIVE BACK TO MSU?

**A.** I bring my executive team to the university, usually five of us, and we'll come in for a week and spend about four days in the classroom. We split up. They do classes, I do classes and then we meet with the students and talk about our Manager in Training program (MIT).

We had been talking about putting together an MIT program for a while at the hotel, and Missouri State came to San Francisco and they reached out. I said, "We're really interested in working and partnering with the university. I'm just not sure how."

So, they asked me to speak at a speaker series and I did. I said, "We're really interested in creating some sort of scholarship program." And Dr. Stephanie Hein (head of the department of hospitality leadership) said, "Well, what do you want that to look like?"

I said, "Well, we want to give but we also need to get back. So, could we offer this? Here's a scholarship, and then you divvy it out how you want to and then the students who received the scholarship, maybe they do an internship."

We had a couple of conversations and then we took the ball and ran with it. They use the MIT program now when they recruit students to the department of hospitality leadership.

We rent apartments for the students. The MIT program introduces them to every single department in the hotel during a nine-month period. And then once they're out, they get to choose where they want to land. It's always funny to me, no one ever lands where they thought they were going to!

We spend a lot of time with the students one-on-one in the MIT program. At one point, I had 13 students from Missouri State employed.

We also go to the College of Business and teach there.

Presutti is now the vice president and general manager of Hotel Nikko, Inc., and Hotel Nikko San Francisco.

In 2006, she was named the first female officer and general manager in the history of the Nikko Hotels International chain. It's a Tokyo-based company with properties in Asia, Europe, North America and the South Pacific.

Under Presutti's leadership, the Hotel Nikko San Francisco has been named by the San Francisco Business Times as one of the Best Places to Work in the Bay area for four years, earned an Energy Star award for nine consecutive years and earned a four-star rating from Forbes Travel Guide.

She travels the world, has hosted multiple U.S. presidents at Hotel Nikko and spends weekends at her home in Napa.



Anna Marie Presutti's dog, Buster, is the "Canine Operating Officer" at the Hotel Nikko in San Francisco. Presutti has built an impressive career in the hospitality industry.

PHOTO BY ROY MANZANARES

A lot of that is marketing and human resources. People may not think of the hotel business as a business. For them, it's fun. But for instance, my particular businesses, it's an \$80 million to \$90 million a year business.

**Q. DID YOU LEARN ANYTHING FROM MISSOURI STATE THAT YOU STILL USE TODAY?**

**A.** An education is exactly that: You're getting yourself more

educated. Whatever industry you're in, you're learning how to focus, how to juggle your time and how to do a lot of life skills.

I learned that I have a communication disorders major, but I can do anything with that.

**Q. WHY DID YOU BECOME A CABINET MEMBER?**

**A.** Because Wendy Ferguson (executive director of development) asked me.

I have to be honest with you, when they asked me to do it, I didn't really know what I was getting into. You don't really know all the stuff that goes on behind the scenes at a university. I've learned more about it.

It's interesting to me, because it is the business side of the university. It's what keeps the engine going, from a financial perspective.

It's great to see so many people committed to the cause. It almost mirrors the not-for-profit world, but the education world is even more stringent and difficult.

This year, the Missouri State Foundation created committees. I've been on a couple of those.

One of the things we're working on is women in philanthropy and getting more women involved in the university. That's been a really great thing. ▽

# FACES *of the* FOUNDATION



## ALUMNI RELATIONS EXPERT: “FOR ME, THIS IS HOME”

*Debbie Branson, '99, returned to Missouri State to finish her degree as a nontraditional student. In 2003, she joined the Alumni Association. She is proud that it plays an important role in keeping people connected to MSU once they graduate.*

WRITTEN BY JULIANA GOODWIN

*Debbie Branson, the interim director of alumni relations, knows first-hand how strong a graduate's bond to Missouri State can be.*

She cemented her loyalty to MSU as a nontraditional student.

"For me, this is home. This is where I feel like I was meant to be."

Originally, she came to campus as a first-generation, traditional-aged student. She had a rocky first semester, then dropped out and got married at age 18. The Springfield native had her first child at 19.

Branson worked as a nurse's assistant for a few years. After her second son was born, she stayed home until he went to kindergarten. Next, Branson became a lunch lady for Springfield Public Schools. This job offered decent benefits and allowed for quality time with her family.

"I just kept thinking, 'I don't want to do this forever.' I needed something more," Branson said.

So, in 1990, she took a class at Missouri State and loved it. There was one little problem: paying for it.

"I thought, 'There has to be a scholarship.' Back then, everything was printed. I picked up a handbook of available scholarships, and there was one designated for an adult learner. I filled out the form and was given \$500. That pretty much paid for my class and books. I thought, 'This is good.' So, I applied again in the spring semester. Once again, I gratefully received the scholarship."

She chiseled away at her degree and, over time, her credits added up. Branson graduated cum laude in 1999 with a degree in public relations and communications.

As a 41-year-old, she was nervous about attending the senior dinner and honors awards ceremony.

"I just remember Dr. John Keiser, the president of the university at the time, held those cords out to me and I just grabbed them with a death grip. 'They're mine!,'" she said with a chuckle.

Her former professor Dave Dollar helped her land her first public relations job at the American Red Cross. She was a one-woman show and learned a lot.

But she wanted to find a way back to her alma mater.

"There was just a feeling I had when I came to campus to go to class. It was a feeling of peace and pride. I loved it so much."

After four years at the Red Cross, a position became available in the alumni

office in 2003. Branson was hired. At that time, the office consisted of Branson and the executive director. Now, there are four employees and two graduate assistants.

## **GROWING THE REACH OF THE OFFICE**

Her first years were fairly quiet, but then President Michael Nietzel arrived and had a new vision for the Alumni Association.

Nietzel saw their potential for relationship-building outside of southwest Missouri. He wanted them to organize events and have more visibility in communities across the country.

Branson started traveling to St. Louis to meet with alumni. The office launched a full-color magazine.

Their schedules were sometimes crazy. One week, Branson and the former director hosted an event in St. Louis on Thursday. They caught a flight in the morning to San Diego and had an event there Friday night. On Saturday, they drove to Los Angeles for another soiree. Sunday, they flew to Phoenix for another event, and were back home on Monday.

"I was like, 'Wow, this is awesome.' I was on top of the world," Branson said. "I thought that was the best thing ever. I mean, exhausting, yes, but we were able to visit face-to-face with people. And that's when it started clicking with me that this was what this was all about. It's keeping people connected to the university, and I was the link."

## **PLANNING EVENTS AROUND U.S.**

Pre-pandemic, Branson was the designated liaison for the St. Louis area; Washington, D.C.; Denver and Phoenix.

Normally, she would plan an array of alumni events, such as baseball outings in St. Louis, reunions at Homecoming, the Bears of Distinction Dinner and more.

A few years ago, Branson started Bears in Action. This program encourages alumni to perform volunteer service in the cities where they live on a specific day.

"I'm really proud of that project because it helps people fulfill part of the public affairs mission: community engagement," she said.

When the pandemic hit, alumni staff had to cancel and adapt traditions. Boomer's 5K went virtual. They started a virtual book club, which now has 250 members. The Bear Games, an online scavenger hunt at Homecoming, was a hit.

"We worked with a third-party company," Branson said. "It was a really

awesome app where people could answer the clues with either a video, a photo or a text answer. Now we're in the process of combining the successful virtual offerings with the in-person events."

The travel program was put on hold, but trips for 2022 and next have been planned and posted online. Branson hopes people are excited to get back out in the world and connect with fellow Bears.

## **FEELING BEAR PRIDE**

Working in the alumni office has afforded her many unique experiences.

She has been able to go to nationally and internationally known social, political and athletic events, including the Tournament of Roses parade.

And after more than a dozen years traveling to St. Louis, she has established incredible relationships in that city. Some of those Bears have been to every event she's hosted and feel like family.

Several years ago, Branson began working with a group who started the St. Louis MarooNation Golf Tournament to provide scholarship money. "We are now working on our sixth-annual tournament. They're very close to endowing their scholarship. I'm really proud of those guys. They do an awesome job of reaching other alumni and providing student support."

## **SHAPING THE FUTURE**

The alumni office is now working on a long-range plan. They are shaping a future vision that includes a volunteer network.

Branson works with volunteer members of the MSU Alumni Association board and council on the Alumni Experiences and Engagement Committee. She will help guide and implement the vision of that committee.

The goal is to engage and support alumni, while creating involvement and volunteerism opportunities that benefit both the alumni and the university.

Ultimately, the objective is to encourage Bears to give back any way that they can, whether it be financial, through an investment of time or a gift of talents.

Branson personally contributes monthly to Dave Dollar's scholarship fund because she received scholarship money for college and because Dollar was her mentor.

Every contribution counts, and after a fund is endowed, it lives forever.

"It's a way to make a difference at Missouri State." ▾

# MISSOURI STATE UNIVERSITY FOUNDATION TRUSTEES AND COMMITTEES

**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.

In April 2021, an evening reception was held for all trustees at Mother’s Brewing Company. This year was the first time a spring meeting was held for all members — a new tradition we plan to continue!



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**MORE ABOUT THE TRUSTEES:**  
*[MissouriStateFoundation.org/Trustees](https://MissouriStateFoundation.org/Trustees)*

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# OTHER ORGANIZATIONS AND HONORS FOR SUPPORTERS

## The Founders Club

The Founders Club recognizes the university's most generous donors. Members have distinguished benefits, and are recognized for their loyal commitment to the future of Missouri State.

FIND A LIST OF MEMBERS:  
**[MissouriStateFoundation.org/FoundersClub](https://MissouriStateFoundation.org/FoundersClub)**

## The Founders Club Medallion Honorees

Each year, Founders Club medallions are presented to alumni, friends, businesses and organizations that support Missouri State at generous levels. The university holds a reception and ceremony at which new members are recognized.

FIND A LIST OF ALL RECIPIENTS:  
**[MissouriStateFoundation.org/FoundersClub](https://MissouriStateFoundation.org/FoundersClub)**

## Alumni Association Board of Directors

The Missouri State University Alumni Association is governed by an alumni board with officers. The board represents the interests of the alumni population, helps the university make strategic plans and provides leadership in many other ways.

MORE ABOUT THE BOARD:  
**[MissouriState.edu/AlumniBoard](https://MissouriState.edu/AlumniBoard)**

## The Bears Fund

The Bears Fund is the fundraising program for men's and women's intercollegiate athletics. The Bears Fund is an opportunity for you to support our hard-working student-athletes while receiving gratitude, recognition and exclusive benefits in return.

MORE ABOUT THE BEARS FUND:  
**[MissouriState.edu/TheBearsFund](https://MissouriState.edu/TheBearsFund)**

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## *In your next issue of* **ADVANCEMENTS** *magazine*

One of the priorities of the Onward, Upward campaign is support for the many programs that lead to a full, rewarding university experience.

Our programs enrich our community. We create an educated workforce. We promote economic development and form productive partnerships. We support championship-level athletics teams. We offer arts and culture events.

We also give you ways to engage with our public affairs mission, which connects Bears to real-world issues and prepares them to be ethical leaders.

Just as the benefits of MSU extend beyond academics, the benefits of this campaign will not stop at the boundaries of campus.

Learn in our next issue about how your support of Missouri State University programs heightens our impact on students and society.

