

MINERAL AREA COLLEGE Alumni

M A G A Z I N E for Alumni and Friends of Mineral Area College and Flat River Junior College

FALL/WINTER 2016



TO OUR READERS



The Music Department's annual Evening of Jazz featured Grammy Award-winning saxophonist Chip McNeill (center) and MAC's Jazz Ensemble and Kicks Band.

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Dear Alumni & Friends,

With autumn colors dominating the campus scenery, excitement abounds with the completion of the second phase of capital renovation projects courtesy of House Bill 19, signed into law by Governor Nixon last year. With the support of our local elected officials in the General Assembly, the college received a \$1.8 million allocation over two years that enabled upgrades to classrooms, the Robert E. Sechrest Sr. Field House and campus common areas.

Performing arts patrons will notice the Theater's new exterior, foyer, stage floor and access ramp. The college's facilities are now in much better condition thanks to the continued support from Jefferson City, as well as the community's support of prior bond issues.

At it's annual summer planning session, the board selected quality initiatives to accomplish for the upcoming year. In August, to honor veterans for their service to our country, our trustees amended policy to extend in-district tuition rates to not only veterans, but their spouses and dependents, as well. Congratulations to Lisa Umfleet who was appointed to the Board of Trustees this fall.

We want donors who support MAC Foundation's annual Enhancement Grant Match Campaign to know their contributions are at work. Several pieces of SIM Lab equipment for the Allied Health Department and integrated curriculum and equipment for the Technology Department's Advanced Manufacturing Lab were purchased, totaling nearly \$200,000.

As we look toward 2017, Missouri's community colleges will focus on a revamping of general education, the most significant revision of our curriculum since 2001. All community colleges are required to adopt a common 42-hour general education block by 2018, due to the passage of Senate Bill 997. This legislation establishes similar general education courses to make student transfers easier. Our faculty and staff will spend countless hours developing a common core general education block. Then, they will focus on the creation of common course outlines for each course in that new block. The motivation of the legislation is part of "Complete College America" — an effort to increase the number of Missourians who hold an associate degree or high-demand certificate.

As always, please feel free to visit your community college. We hope to see you soon!

Sincerely,

Dr. Steven Kurtz, President



During Midnight Madness in October, the MAC volleyball team faced MSU–West Plains, ranked #3 in the nation.

FEATURES

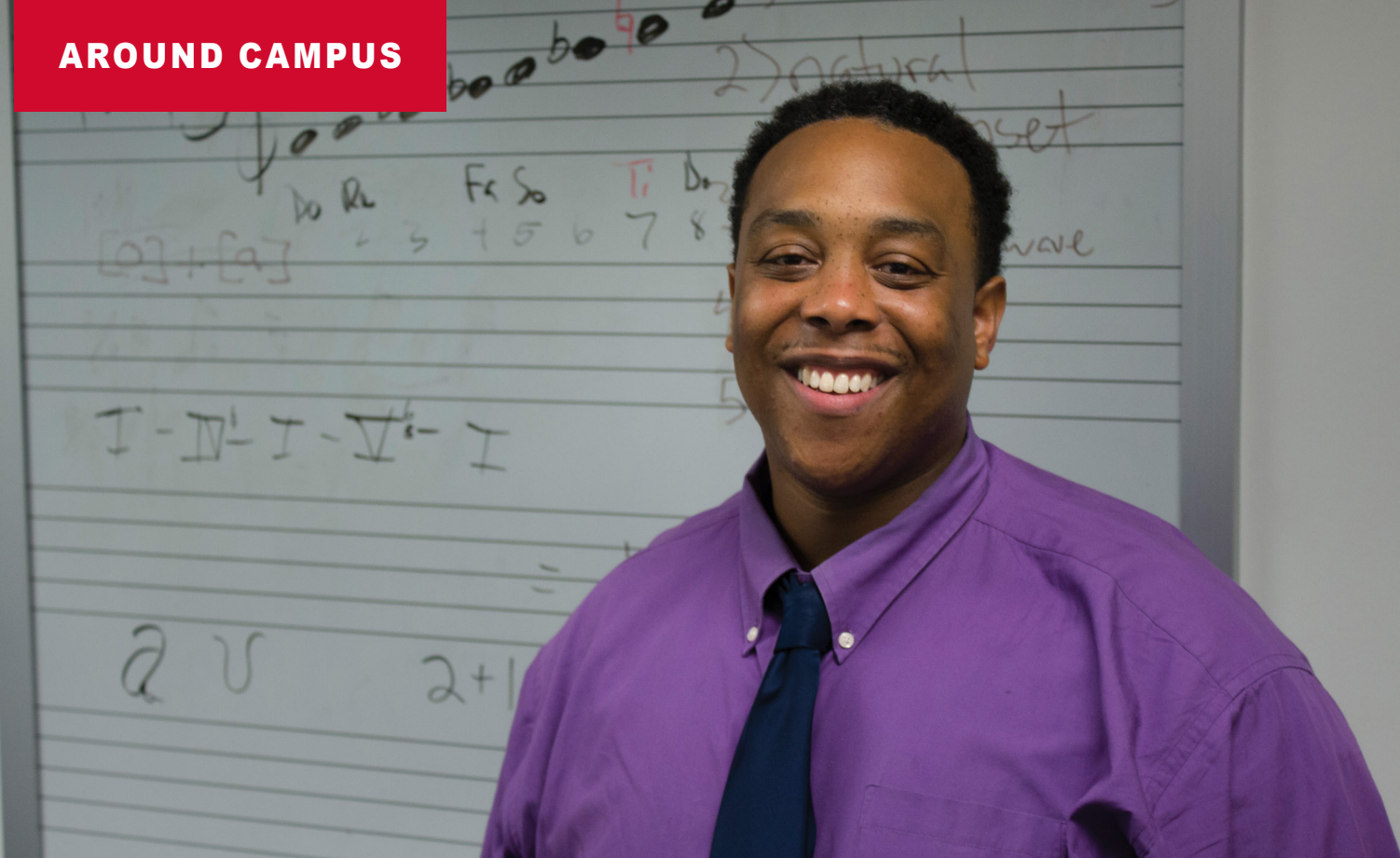
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On the Cover

Organic Chemistry I lab experiments teach science principles as well as patience and diligence. Pre-pharmacy major Kara Leimbach of Perryville uses thin layer chromatography to separate and examine different pigments extracted from autumn leaves found on campus.



Harry Cecil taught music in St. Louis before coming to MAC in 2013.

Nurturing His Music Passion

MAC's Director of Choirs Harry Cecil had a music-filled childhood. Harry was surrounded by the church. He had a mother who sang as well as a father who played trumpet, had a funk band and was a preacher. He grew up on gospel and the soulful Motown sounds of artists like Marvin Gaye and James Brown.

"I always knew I wanted to teach but wasn't sure if it was music or math," says Harry. "It's a little weird I excelled in both since they draw from totally different skill sets. My middle school choir teacher is why I chose music. One day I needed a hall pass, and she said she'd allow it if I signed up for her choir class. I didn't know it at the time, but that was my life and career decision."

Harry considers having music as both his hobby and career as one of the greatest benefits of his profession. "I am blessed to wake up every day doing what I truly love. I am excited MAC affords me the opportunity to nurture

my passion and share it with others," he says.

For his students and the Music Department, Harry establishes ambitious goals. "I am an advocate of the community college as a means to prepare students for their next level regardless of whether they seek a professional music career or are uncertain about their career plans," explains the graduate of Truman State and the University of Missouri music programs. "My role is to expose our students to excellent music experiences. I also help them navigate the educational process as they submit applications, prepare for auditions, and gain acceptance into their next level music programs at larger schools."

Recruiting new students is another goal. "Our students regularly tour and perform at area high schools to encourage kids to consider MAC's music programs," says the vocal music instructor. "It's important our students

experience college-level repertoires including historically significant works like Bach's master works in German and Bernstein's work in Hebrew."

One of Harry's music favorites is the no-audition-required Community Singers, which blends the voices of students and community members who enjoy vocal music and performance. Harry extends this invitation: "If you love to sing and are available for most rehearsals, we welcome you. We're looking for people—from high school to 90+ years old—who appreciate great music, like to sing and want to find their voice of expression. It's a great way to meet people who share your interest in music."

The Community Singers meet on Thursdays, 7–9 p.m., in the MAC Choir Room. For more information about Harry's programs, contact him at (573) 518-2230 or hcecil@MineralArea.edu.

The Future is Bright

“Students? They’re my favorite part of this job!” exclaims Jennifer Sikes, child development department chair. “It’s so exciting to see their success stories. This summer alone, students were hired at Parents as Teachers, Head Start, public and private schools, and even as a nanny for a Cape Girardeau family. Career opportunities look favorable in the early childhood education employment arenas.”

Jennifer bubbles with enthusiasm when she teaches her early childhood education classes. She interjects her “Do I have a story!” nuggets as a means to open real-life discussions with her students. A recent nugget centered on new parents who brought their several-days-old baby to the swimming pool in 90-degree weather.

Her students learn that early childhood education focuses on the idea that learning begins at birth, and caring for and educating children should be in tandem. They come to understand children learn through guided types of play. This sets the foundation for the future educational process, develops a sense of identity and self, encourages relationships with others, and facilitates many aspects important to children’s growth and development. Jennifer stresses, “When parents make decisions regarding outside-the-home early childhood education for their children, it’s mindful to remember education begins when the child is brought home from the hospital. Parents sometimes forget they are the most influential factor in their children’s development and learning experiences. So, in terms of a child’s physical, intellectual, emotional and social development, early childhood is a crucial stage of life.”

Students are earning the Child Development Associate (CDA) credential which is the most widely recognized



Jennifer Sikes' enthusiasm energizes her students about early childhood education.

credential in early childhood education and a key stepping stone to career advancement. The CDA prepares people to be qualified caregivers who not only work with children, but also with parents and other adults to nurture children's physical, social, emotional and intellectual growth. The CDA is a mark of professionalism and can assure parents and administrators they've hired a competent employee to work with their children.

Employment opportunities in early childhood education include assistant teaching for programs like Head Start, Even Start or First Steps, and teaching in licensed, and/or accredited, privately-owned programs. Other options include community service programs such as YMCA child care programs or employer-

owned child care programs and directors of licensed child care centers serving up to 20 children.

“The future is bright for our graduates,” explains Jennifer. “In addition to employment, many students opt to advance their education, qualifications and earning potential with additional certifications or a degree. Earning a bachelor’s degree is convenient through Central Methodist University on the Park Hills campus or via other universities with which MAC has credit transfer agreements.”

A few classes and some work experience are required before pursuing the CDA credential. Contact Jennifer for additional information at (573) 518-2197 or jsikes@MineralArea.edu.



Julianne Brown and Jennifer Hamlin review notes as they prepare for a competencies review.

Degrees Instead of Debt

“The GI Bill has been a lifesaver and is the only way I’m able to attend college.”

Sometimes veterans face challenges as they transition from the military to the civilian labor market. Many veterans seek additional education and training. Student veterans’ chances of leaving college with degrees instead of debt are good. MAC Trustee Alan Wells explains, “We wanted to recognize those who have served our country. The board unanimously agreed to amend college policy to go beyond what is required by state and federal law of extending in-district tuition rates to veterans of U.S. military forces. MAC’s policy now extends the in-district tuition rate to not only veterans, but their spouses and dependents, as well.”

About 100 MAC students use GI Bill benefits and other campus support services. Veterans and family members commend Student Services for tireless

efforts to traverse the maze of paperwork to get enrolled. Also, MAC’s Veterans Organization provides support for those who have served and is open to all students, regardless of military status.

Two Marines

Upon meeting, classmates Jennifer Hamlin and Julianne Brown were astonished to learn they both were Marines. Now, they are pleased to be LPN students.

“The GI Bill has been a lifesaver throughout all my schooling. I’ve always worked full-time while in school, but I’ve decided to not work while in the LPN program. The GI Bill is the only way I’m able to do that,” says Julianne. “I served five years as a helicopter crew chief on the CH53D and CH53E and did two tours in Afghanistan. When I got out, I was a sergeant.”

Julianne knew nursing was what she wanted to do. “While living in Maryland, I decided to apply to MAC’s nursing program,” she explains. “Figuring out application processes and deadlines from out of state posed challenges. The exceptional help and emails from Sheila Beard, the Allied Health Department administrative assistant, played an important role in my acceptance into the LPN program. Sheila went above and beyond to encourage me.” Julianne plans to bridge into the RN program and hopefully continue to a BSN degree.

“I transitioned very well from civilian to military and back to civilian life. I adapt easily to whatever I’m doing,” Julianne adds. “I’ve mostly worked with men in my jobs, so a career field with mostly women is a little different but also refreshing. I’m thankful I’m in the program. Everyone at MAC has been incredibly helpful and encouraging.”

Jennifer, who served eight years, says, “The military was appealing since I’m one

who always likes challenges. It forced me to grow up quickly, while allowing me to experience other parts of the world and different cultures. The toughest part was being away from my family. I remember my tears as I boarded the bus to ship off to Afghanistan on my daughter's third birthday. I was away for six months, but we kept in touch via Skype and other technology."

Her knack for helping others kindled Jennifer's interest in the medical field. "Thanks to my Post-911 GI Bill benefits, I am in what I consider the best nursing program in the state," exclaims the Fredericktown sophomore. "My military training developed discipline, boosted my maturity level and taught me to prioritize. All this helped build a better future for my daughter and me, and the same assets are valued in nursing. Now, my challenge is the nursing program where I am learning to re-package these skills and use them in a new way. After my LPN degree, I hope to be accepted into the hybrid nursing program and work in the Southeast Missouri area."

Arcadia Valley Family

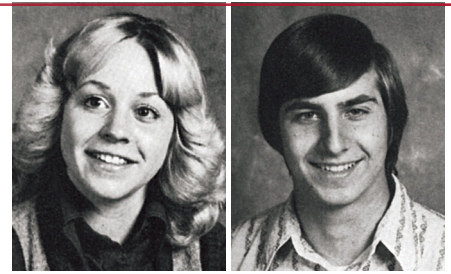
Without her husband's GI benefits, Dawn Beech says she and her two sons, Joey and Jarad, could never afford

college. Dawn admits, "We are so grateful for this college opportunity. But, I was completely overwhelmed by the whole process. That's when I met totally awesome Tippi Seals and the Financial Aid ladies who walked me through. Now, I'm enjoying all my classes. In my prior work, I helped set up a new network and software. I can see myself working in this field, so I'm taking computer networking classes. I spend more time studying now because it's harder to learn and retain things."

Jarad started as a part-time student taking night classes but plans to enroll full-time to complete coursework leading to an industrial maintenance career. Joey's career goal is to be an Army nuclear engineer. "My test scores were good enough for the program, but I learned I have a perforated eardrum which needs to be surgically repaired. Once that's healed, I'll be back on track," he explains. "Of course, the military will give me good training. But part of the reason I joined is because so many family members have served. I feel pride in joining a cause bigger than myself to help serve our nation."

MAC is pleased to provide affordable, convenient educational opportunities for student veterans and their families.

GI benefits make college possible for Joey and Dawn Beech.



Flashback

1976

The class included Margaret Thebeau, David Sohn, Jesse Vandergriff, Lorraine Becker, Karen Carver, Larry Sitze and Mary Walton.

They Changed Me

“I’m 52 and going to college for the first time. It’s scary!”

For over 20 years, Greg Gill’s rock-and-roll lifestyle prospered. He achieved success as an accomplished guitarist in an ‘80s cover band and later performed with Z-Lot-Z, a progressive metal band in Houston, making three records and opening for dozens of big-name bands.

“I also partnered with Bobby Blotzer of Ratt to open a successful Houston-based recording studio,” says Greg. “When Bobby returned to playing music, we hit a financial downturn. I spent all my time at the studio just to make ends meet. Alcohol, drugs and partying are the casualties of this business. Then, it happened. While at the studio, my son referred to the studio

as ‘Daddy’s house.’ Suddenly, it was crystal-clear I needed to realign my priorities for my family.”

Finding work outside the music industry was tough. Doors never seemed to open, but he didn’t give up. Greg eventually landed in Arcadia, a place the family proudly calls “home” because of its loving, caring and nurturing people. “When Meadow Heights Church offered me a student-ministry leader position for high school kids, I was hesitant. I’d never had a relationship with God, so how could I help them? The pastor said sharing my real-life experiences and having frank discussions would be a solid starting point. For about six years, I

worked with those kids,” says Greg, “and, ironically they changed me. In the process of talking about respecting one another, helping each other to grow, and adding value to each other, I benefited the most.”

In fact, those very students are the reason Greg is now a MAC student. “Positive comments from those kids enticed me to look into MAC,” he says. “They said the campus, atmosphere and teachers are, in their words, ‘totally awesome.’ Because of them and the unconditional support of my wife and our son, I decided to enroll. Sometimes I think I’m crazy. I’m 52 and going to college for the first time. It’s scary! My goal is to get a teaching degree in music. I want to be a better communicator and leader so I can inspire and encourage the next generation through my passion for music.”

Recently, he and a long-time bandmate partnered to open Endeavor Studio at Arcadia Academy in Arcadia. Though reluctant, Greg re-entered the recording business as a matter of finances. However, because his family is committed to Christ, Greg says, “This will be a totally different and more selective approach. Calls from former band members are coming in. Out-of-state bands have actually come to Arcadia to record. They think our area is fantastic and are blown away by the beauty here.”

Thanks to technology, Greg is doing work for people in Europe as well as voice overs for apps. Although recording opportunities seem lucrative, Greg’s not ready to give up his church media specialist position and plans to complete his degree. Greg says moving to Arcadia, building a new start for his family, and creating a relationship with God has been a remarkable journey. He looks forward to serving young people through his music.

Although comfortable in his studio, Greg Gill was nervous about starting classes.





Freshman cheerleader Kate Goza poses for her student ID.

Communication is Key

It's amazing what a difference can be made by a well-timed suggestion from an instructor who cares.

Kate Goza credits MAC Cheer Coach Tia Propst for offering her support and encouragement to join the cheerleading

squad. "At a MAC game, Tia overheard me telling my mom I could never make a college cheer squad," explains Kate. "That's when Tia encouraged me to try out. Her enthusiasm made me realize I should at least try. I'm so glad I did.

The experience has been so rewarding!"

Kate says she's excited to be a cheerleader. "It's really amazing how quickly close friendships formed. Many of us were high school rivals, and now we're close friends. That's something super cool here at MAC," says the Potosi freshman. "Our high school competitiveness now centers on working together to be a successful cheer squad."

"I learned how important communication skills are to teamwork . . ."

Former English teachers who doubled as cheer coaches influenced her to consider teaching English, her ultimate career goal. "We worked closely outside the classroom. That's when I learned how important communication skills are to teamwork and developing better cheer skills. These teachers immersed their students in fun activities to teach a potentially dry subject in very interesting ways," explains Kate. "In fact, I didn't like to read at all. One teacher knew I was interested in horses and brought me two books about them. All she asked was that I try to read the books. Wow! Now I blame her for me not being able to get my head out of a book!"

"MAC's such a positive experience. Everyone is so friendly and will help without hesitation. I like how involved everyone gets with all the campus sports, clubs and activities. I can rely on teachers and coaches to help me accomplish my career and personal goals. I'm impressed that teachers are also involved in the community. This helps me realize what kind of a teacher and role model I want to be for my future students."

After MAC, Kate plans to complete her bachelor's degree at Missouri State University. In addition to teaching, she's really excited to travel all over the world, especially Paris.



Kelly Orf enjoys membership in PTK and serves as vice president for leadership.

Doubts? You Bet!

Kelly Orf of Perryville believes she's a voice for individuals with disabilities who give up the idea of college because they're afraid of the unknown.

"Here's what I want them to know," says Kelly. "Most important, it takes your own, pure willpower to get started. Financial aid options are available. Vocational Rehabilitation helps with my educational expenses. MAC's got so many assets. Employees become your partners to help you figure things out. Just being on campus broadens my perspective and allows me to let go of toxic and negative things. And, it's a super place for me to build relationships with positive people. I love what MAC helps me achieve."

Kelly was diagnosed with audio sclerosis, an inherited condition which progressively led to significant hearing loss. "My digital hearing aids retrained my brain so I am able to hear in a different way. This is amazing and totally changed my life for the better. Without the hearing

aids, attending college wouldn't have been a consideration."

For all of her life, Kelly's dealt with anxiety. "It's something I learned to manage," explains the sophomore. "But, about five years ago, my life spiraled out of control. Something sparked my anxiety to become depression. Then, I began experiencing psychotic episodes and terrible hallucinations that caused me to act strange. I was frightening my family. They didn't know who I was anymore, nor did I. Finally, it was determined the problems are attributed to a chemical imbalance. Now, with assistance from my wonderful therapist, I've learned to identify what triggers the episodes and ways to manage. I am forever grateful to my therapist for helping me figure this out. So is my family."

A degree in accounting and business management is Kelly's goal. "I was married at 19. My husband was gone for weeks at a time as an over-the-road driver.

"Every day I work on myself to be a healthy person."

To keep our family together, the kids and I went on the road with him, and I home-schooled the kids," explains Kelly. "Now, I'm preparing for my career to offer us a lifestyle where he can be home more. Every day I work on myself to be a healthy person. I'm determined with a mission. I desire to be a stronger, successful, more confident person. My goal is to be a good wife, mom and future employee."

Kelly encourages others with disabilities, "Push on. Take a serious look at college like I did. You bet I had doubts . . . lots of them. Would I be smart enough? But, I'm here to tell you, MAC helps find the best in you if you're willing to work. It's boosted my confidence and reminded me I'm capable of so many things. It won't be perfect all the time, but it's so worth it."

Campus Renovations

Campus building maintenance is a never-ending quest. Fortunately, MAC received a funding boost from the state in the form of House Bill 19, a bipartisan effort to address secondary schools' maintenance and repair needs. The supplemental appropriation bill, passed in 2015, allowed MAC to obtain \$1.8 million of the \$200 million from bond proceeds issued by the State of Missouri to remodel and refurbish existing facilities.

The 18-month project touches many parts of campus. In addition to a facelift for its restrooms, the new lighting is the most notable improvement in the Sechrest Field House. A total redesign of the Theater's front entrance, necessitated by ground settling and the

inability to obtain replacement parts, will be the new campus showpiece. The Theater foyer creates a more inviting appearance with a gallery-style art display area. The replacement of the 1980s stage floor was long overdue. The Concourse Area better serves some ADA considerations, while the College Board Room is without a substantial water leak in its ceiling.

A combination of HB19 and MAC funds were used to remodel the Technology Building's first floor to accommodate new technology and obtain a generator for campus servers and science labs. The North College Center, which started as a child care center and office space, is now the hub of manufacturing technology education.

To better accommodate the building's needs, work will soon begin to replace HVAC ducts and air conditioning units, and possibly remodel the kitchen based on available funds.

MAC President Steve Kurtz, who served as MCCA's Legislative Chair for the past three years, says, "On behalf of Missouri's 100,000 community college students, we appreciate the support from the governor and General Assembly to provide the much-needed funding to improve the learning environment of our students. We are very grateful for the funding that substantially reduces our deferred maintenance list and increases the quality of our facilities."

The Theater's improved entryway will be a new campus showpiece.





The national tournament is on the minds of golfers: Andrew Northern (Bloomfield), Kaleb Counts (Sullivan), Ben Bolden (LaPlata), Zane West-Derby (Owensville), Harry Willsher (Bournemouth, England), Tyler Fieser (Cuba), Ricardo DeVoto (Mar del plata, Argentina), Jon Ettinger (Cuba), Zach Kubinski (Crocker), Spence Lorch (Advance) and Marcos DeVoto (Mar del plata, Argentina).

Hungry for the National Tournament

MAC golfers—Tyler Fieser, Harry Willsher and Ben Bolden—talk golf and the quest to return to the NJCAA National Tournament.

“Our national tournament experience opened our eyes to what’s out there and what’s possible,” explain sophomores

Tyler and Harry, who competed last year. “It’s scary to look around and see 150 other golfers who can beat you at any moment. It’s just like the pro circuit with all the fanfare and hearing your name announced over the loudspeaker. That single experience ignited this

hunger and drive for our whole team to work toward the common goal of returning to the national tournament.”

Coach Don Huff, in his fifth year as golf coach, is well-respected by his golfers. Tyler, a sophomore marketing major, says, “At the national tournament, Coach Huff learned, too. He brings a new mentality to practices and cultivates the ‘we believe we can win’ team attitude. What’s so cool about Coach Huff is he’s a good leader—straightforward, honest and trustworthy, just like he wants us to be. He’s here for support if we need it, but he doesn’t hover over us. He’s assembled a team with a passion for golf and working together. With his ‘consequences of our actions’ beliefs, he’s developing us as people so we can move on to another

Technology helped Ben Bolden, Tyler Fieser and Harry Willsher develop friendships before they actually met in person.



TEAM PHOTOS COURTESY OF BRANDON SCHELDT

school and life. And, academics are first with Coach. If we cut a class, we hear about it."

Tyler and Harry welcomed freshman Ben Bolden, as their new teammate and roommate. "Everyone agrees our team chemistry is phenomenal," says Ben. "I visited several schools. But, at MAC everything just clicked. When Harry, Tyler and I played a round, we were immediate friends on the first fairway. MAC's especially good for me because it has the only fire science program in the state, so I can complete my degree, too."

Ben adds, "The whole team has the 'returning to the national tournament' mentality. We get up at 6 a.m. and hit the gym. At practice, we hit two or three practice buckets, play nine holes, then practice putting and chipping. We grab something to eat, and hit the course again until it's dark."

Even before they met in person, their friendships had evolved. "It's unbelievable how well-acquainted we got via Facebook, Snapchat and FaceTime," says Harry, the business major. "Then, to finally meet was super. These guys are lifetime friends. It's extra special when I'm 4,300 miles away from my family in England and my teammates invite me to be with their families for the holidays or to go hunting and fishing."

Tyler adds, "Our team has such an awesome bond that will last far beyond MAC. We're really good friends who enjoy doing things together. We watch out for each other." Ben smiles, "We can almost read each other's mind. I don't like to get up early. But, when Harry knocks on my door, I know a fresh pot of coffee is waiting for me. Then, during my night class, I might get a text saying 'We're bringing some wings for supper.' Nothing can ever replace friendships like these."

For more about MAC Golf, visit www.MineralArea.edu/athletics.



Region 16 Champions heading to the national tournament: (back row) Head Coach Tim Copeland, Emily Eaton, Latyanna Burns, Anica Popadic, Bailey Manley, Abbie McAlister, Cailey Bracken, Assistant Coach Chelsey Politte (MAC 2007–09); (middle row) Samantha Feeney, Jane Kickhan, Hunter Vargo, Pam Zuluaga, Chelsea Cureton; (front row) Taylor Covington, Breanna Sitzes, Tijana Milicic, Jessica Lindsey

Volleyball & Life Lessons

The Lady Cards accomplished their season goal: the NJCAA Division I National Tournament. This marks the second tournament appearance in MAC volleyball program history.

Responsibility, consequences and respect are attributes on which Head Coach Tim Copeland builds MAC's volleyball program as he develops competition and life skills. "We live within defined parameters. We accept responsibility and learn from the consequences of our actions. We respect ourselves and others as MAC representatives. We have some fun, too," says the 11-year veteran. "These are life's principles I want the girls to adopt."

The squad includes 12 players who live within 100 miles of MAC and three international players.

"We're literally a sisterhood that enjoys hanging out together," says Cailey Bracken, a physical therapy major. "I wanted a small school with a good volleyball program and MAC's been a good transition for me."

Samantha Feeney, of Cape Girardeau, says, "I heard good things from former players. Small classes are good for learning. It's been an adjustment to manage school

work, practice, playing games and travel."

"I'm a homebody, so MAC's great," smiles Emily Eaton, a North County graduate. "We're a close-knit group with outstanding chemistry. We've had a pretty remarkable season considering we have eleven freshmen this year."

Other highlights include a national ranking, as well as winning the first 12 games, the Kankakee Invitational (Chicago area) and the Region 16 Championship. Congratulations to Tim for his Region 16 Coach of the Year honors.

"We're a very young team that came together and showed significant growth throughout the season," explains Tim. "The girls played aggressively and made smart decisions as they worked toward the team goals we established. It's a challenge to distinguish between 'playing to win' vs. 'playing not to lose' . . . but they developed the 'playing to win' attitude. Even in tough losses, we're developing skills for next year. Academics are important, too. I'm proud the team has earned the Top GPA Honors Award among all MAC's sports teams for the past six years."

See MAC Volleyball tournament results at www.MineralArea.edu/athletics.

Building Lines of Communication



Twenty-two participants in this summer's six-week Citizens Academy gained an insider's look at the thin blue line, with training and education coordinated by the Law Enforcement Academy. The goal of the Citizens Academy is to reduce crime and improve the quality of life in local neighborhoods.

"It's a win-win for the public and law enforcement," says Rich Flotron, director of MAC Law Enforcement Academy. "Citizens see how we work, the challenges we face, and how they can help us keep their communities safe. Law enforcement also benefits because we gain a better understanding of the views and concerns of our community. With all the recent unrest surrounding policing in America, this seemed a great way to build lines of communication between the community and our local law enforcement officers. Community members have an opportunity to make informed decisions regarding controversial issues faced by their communities and to develop methods of working together to reduce crime."

Was the mission accomplished? "Yes!" exclaims Rich. "Feedback was incredibly positive. The academy happened amidst several shooting incidents which prompted poignant discussions surrounding the climate of unrest in our nation and what it means

Fredericktown SWAT team Sergeant Jason Fitzwater shared techniques for threatening situations. Citizens Academy participants are shown below.





I Want to Serve

Recent incidents of officers dying in the line of duty prompted Zackary Durham to choose law enforcement as a career path. He says, "I want to serve our country. I know I can't make a big difference alone, but as part of a department or group, our collective efforts will make an important impact."

The Ste. Genevieve resident continues, "Patriotism seems in short supply. We understand our military forces defend our liberties. But, as civilians, we should be the caretakers and cultivators of what we have as Americans. As young

people, I believe we need to take more responsibility and contribute to the well-being of our nation for future generations."

Zackary says, "The camaraderie and level of teamwork among us cadets formed almost immediately. Teamwork is critical in law enforcement, so I'm glad it's an important part of our curriculum. After completing my law enforcement academy training and EMT certification, I'm looking toward the highway patrol, the Coast Guard and a position at the federal level. I know these plans are down the road, but I am eager to serve our country."

MACLEA cadet Zackary Durham wants more young people to embrace patriotism.

to truly serve and protect the citizens we have been sworn to protect."

The free training program explored several facets of law enforcement. Topics included Patrol Procedures for Traffic/DWI Investigations, Use of Force, Criminal Investigations, Drugs in Our Communities, Terrorism, Firearms Simulation, Driving Simulation, Gangs, Self-Defense and Special Operations.

Academy participant Mary Fox says, "The enthusiastic response of the participants suggests the academy is happening at the right time. Rich Flotron and MAC have positioned our area to build a visible, strong support

base for our local police departments and law enforcement. Behind-the-scenes information was fascinating. I liked the traffic stop session about how the officer controls the situation, attempts to engage the person, and visually gathers all the information in a short time. I think it's important for our police to know they are supported by us citizens."

Participant Susan Dusin of Farmington says, "My Nancy Drew days got me interested in solving crimes and detective work. I highly recommend this program. Two of my favorites were the self-defense session where we actually practiced techniques, and the

program about sex and drug problems in our area. It reinforced the concept that people are not necessarily bad, it's that they make bad choices. We heard firsthand about the split-second decisions officers are required to make when faced with threatening situations. Our law enforcement officers put themselves and their families in harms' way for our safety. They deserve our utmost respect."

Applications for the 2017 Citizens Academy should be available in March or April 2017. For information, contact Rich at (573) 518-2341 or rflotron@MineralArea.edu.

From procedures to self-defense, participants said the hands-on learning was an integral part of the academy.



THANK YOU



The behind-the-scenes work by Adam Steele (Potosi), Danny Montgomery (Desloge), Logan Willmore (Farmington), Sam Gallaher (Farmington) and other crew members is a crucial component of MAC's live theatre performances.

Donor Honor Roll

With much gratitude, we recognize generous alumni and friends who loyally support MAC's mission of quality, affordable and accessible education. Thank you for improving lives and enriching communities.

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Include MAC Foundation in your estate plans to help future students.
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For flexibility and convenience, use your debit or credit card to make a one-time gift or automatic donations at www.MineralArea.edu/Foundation.
- Tax Savings**
Consult your estate planner and financial or tax advisor to determine tax considerations for your gifts. MAC Foundation, is a 501(C)(3) charitable entity.

Give today! Use the enclosed envelope, go online or call (573) 518-2114.

Fine Arts Events

-  **Musical: The 25th Annual Putnam County Spelling Bee**
7 PM • November 30, December 1-3
MAC Theater
-  **Holiday Big Band Dance**
6:30 PM • Wednesday, December 7
Alexander's at The Factory, Farmington
-  **Auditions: The Tempest**
2 PM • Sunday, December 11
MAC Theater
-  **Winter Choral Concert: What Sweeter Music**
7:30 PM • Friday, December 16
First Baptist Church, Farmington
Free Admission

THANK YOU



According to students Rachel Bolin, Ashley Gayler, Briara Williams, Marissa Hampton and Kasarah Chamberlain, textbook costs are a big challenge.

Textbook Costs: Unbelievable

“So, at Missouri’s minimum wage, a student needs to work about 22 or 23 hours to afford a single textbook.”

Statistics show a college degree is still a sound financial investment, boosting earnings potential and opportunities over the course of a career. However, the cost of a college education continues to soar. Since the 2008 recession, students and their families feel the “financial pinch” more than usual.

Textbook costs are skyrocketing. Here at MAC, if students can afford tuition, the books and supplies pose another financial hurdle. Even with some previously-owned books, the average cost of textbooks runs between \$600 and \$700 per semester.

First-year nursing students pay almost \$1,000 for their first-semester textbooks since they’re establishing their reference library. A chemistry

student has five required books plus lab gear. A biology text is about \$211, and the accompanying manual is \$106. The average textbook cost is between \$160 and \$175. So, at Missouri’s \$7.65 per hour minimum wage, a student needs to work a minimum of 22 to 23 hours to afford a single textbook.

MAC students share their opinions. “I wish we could rent all our books. It would be a big savings since we probably won’t want to keep most of the books,” says Kasarah Chamberlain of Cape Girardeau. “I paid almost \$800 and that was for only four books,” exclaims Potosi freshman Rachel Bolin. Sophomore Marissa Hampton adds, “Gosh, there are hidden costs, too. We didn’t know we also had to buy an access code so we can have access to the

online homework!” St. Louis freshman Briara Williams says, “Can you believe two of my books were just a package of loose-leaf pages? So, I had to buy a three-ring binder to put them in. It’s unbelievable.”

MAC Foundation Director of Development Kevin Thurman says, “The Buy-A-Textbook Drive is a nice year-end charitable giving option. It’s impossible to accentuate how the donations from college alumni and friends help MAC students. Hopefully, the Buy-A-Textbook Drive will keep some on-the-fringe type students enrolled. Everybody’s donations combined will make a significant difference.”

To help current students achieve their college educations, use the enclosed envelope for your Buy-A-Textbook gift. For more information, contact Kevin at (573) 518-2261 or kthurman@MineralArea.edu.

Investing in the Future



End-of-year giving can capitalize on matching funds until December 31.

Foundation Launches Enhancement Grant Campaign

Mineral Area College has a long history of providing affordable, quality, higher education in the local and surrounding communities. The college has been instrumental in making higher education accessible and affordable to countless students over the years. For decades, MAC's commitment to excellence in higher education has contributed to the community workforce by preparing highly skilled and employable graduates. There is no question MAC is an integral partner in the forward progress of the community.

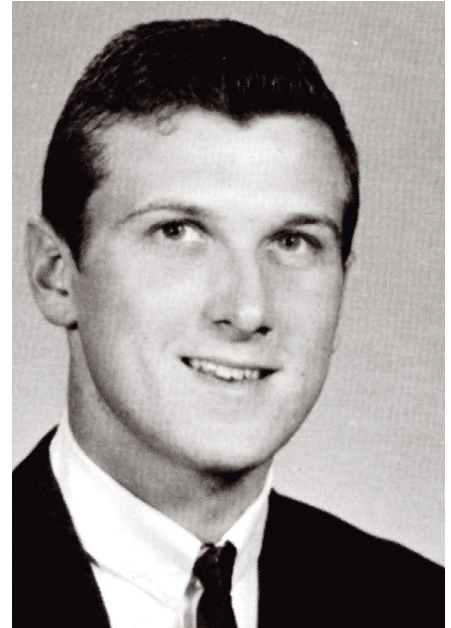
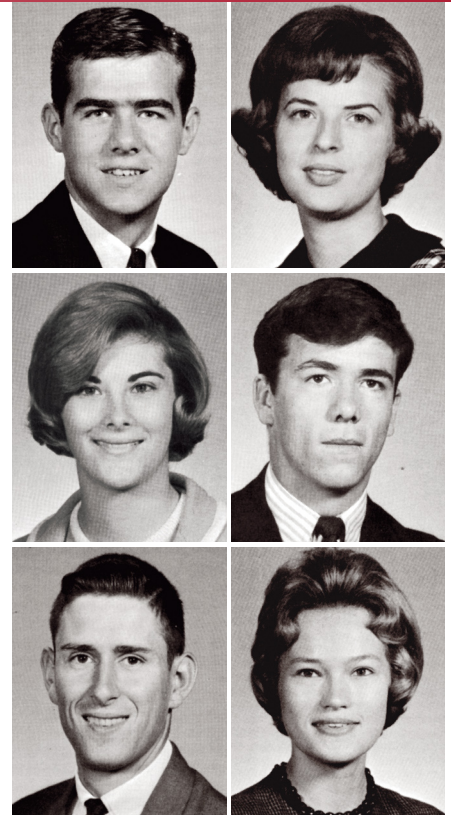
To give MAC graduates the best opportunities for success, the college strives to remain current on curriculum, technology and industry standards. The Department of Elementary & Secondary Education provides a partial grant opportunity which offers a \$3-for-\$1 match for educational institutions as an incentive for growth and expansion of quality career education. MAC Foundation is reaching out to the community to assist in the endeavor to keep the college on the leading edge of preparing students for the workforce.

The Enhancement Grant provides a large portion of the funds required to purchase state-of-the-art equipment, curriculum and training programs. The foundation is offering the opportunity for the community to help MAC in the

form of monetary donations to expand and support current programs. Past campaigns have provided key training curriculum and equipment to a number of programs, including nursing and allied health, law enforcement and technology.

This fundraising effort continues the work of the former Simmons Match Campaign, which for many years was headed by the late Dr. and Mrs. Gayle Simmons. Gayle and Rowena were lifetime educators and graduates of MAC's predecessor, Flat River Junior College. With a dedication to the availability of affordable, quality higher education in the area, the couple spearheaded the annual drive with their own contributions to match those of the community. "We certainly realize the impact that a couple like Dr. and Mrs. Simmons can have on aiding the college in providing students with the tools and experiences needed to be successful in high-demand career occupations," states MAC President Steve Kurtz. "We are confident the community will continue to support their forward-thinking vision."

The Enhancement Grant Campaign runs through December 31, 2016. Give online at www.MineralArea.edu/Foundation or use the enclosed envelope to mail your gift. Call (573) 518-2261 for details.



Flashback

1966

The sophomore class included William Hart, Candace Hutson, Mary Kathryn Wengler, Jim Cartee, Donald Charles Hawn, Sandra Hughes and David Neff.



Danny Montgomery, Ashlee Blunt and Ryan Hathaway are grateful for financial assistance from donors.

The Gift of Scholarship

Talk to students about their scholarships and the value is instantly apparent, extending beyond the actual dollar amount. Recipients feel a sense of accomplishment. They can focus more time on studies, their need to work is reduced or eliminated, and they achieve their goals faster. For some students, a scholarship may be the only reason they attend college. So, to everyone who donates to MAC's scholarship initiatives, thank you for making experiences like the following happen.

Danny Montgomery, a theatre and music scholarship recipient, says college life is a lot more fun because he's involved in all kinds of theatre and fine arts programs. "All the activities are the best thing about MAC," he asserts. "Theatre has opened many new doors for me and has even helped me in my career field. I do theatre to give back to our theatre director, Chuck Gallaher, for everything he has done for me."

The Desloge resident says MAC's instructors make a real difference by dedicating time to help when he needs it. Danny's future plans are to be a

security officer in the military. "With my bachelor's degree, I will be able to train new recruits to be military police officers," he explains. "Nothing specific inspired me to choose criminal justice. I've just always felt like I was supposed to be a soldier and possibly a leader, so I thought this career path would be perfect for me."

Ashlee Blunt of Bonne Terre is the Jewell Wood Elementary Education Scholarship recipient. She says she's grateful for the help it brings in paying for expensive textbooks and helping her achieve her dream of teaching young children. "The kindness of my own kindergarten teacher motivated me to want to become a kindergarten teacher. She always was excited when we learned things. I want to be a part of kindergarteners' lives so I can witness their growth and inspire them to learn. That's so exciting to me," explains the freshman.

Ashlee says, "My MAC experience has been great. My two brothers came here and liked it. So, I thought it would be a good fit for me. And I was right. I like the small classes and the super

nice teachers. My biology teacher, Dr. Knebel, is laid back and explains things very well. I'm not so good in science. So, if she can explain things so I understand, she's a really good teacher!"

Army veteran **Ryan Hathaway** is using his GI Bill benefits. He also receives the Farmington VFW Post 5896 Veterans Scholarship. "If I didn't have this help, I doubt I'd be enrolled. I feel pretty sure if I was working, I would not devote money towards college," explains the Ste. Genevieve sophomore. "So I'm very thankful I have financial help to motivate me to attend college. I'm the kind of person who likes to learn, and now I have a chance to expand my studies." Shortly after high school, Ryan enlisted and says the military made him shape up pretty quickly. Most of his time was served at Fort Benning where he worked as an M1A1 Abrams systems tank maintainer and a recovery specialist who transported equipment in need of repairs. Ryan's career plans are undecided.

The Art & Science of Teaching Science

“I always enjoyed school and thought it would be fun to teach. And, I was so right!”

Do you remember your science teachers? Jackson resident Todd Marler does. “I can truly say I learned more in Mr. Scobee’s botany and Ms. Gunn’s zoology classes than I learned in my entire tenure at Mizzou and SEMO,” says the 1984 MAC grad. Todd’s curiosity about biology and ecology stems from growing up on the family farm near Bonne Terre where he was close to the outdoors, nature and animals.

“I always enjoyed school and thought it would be fun to teach. And, I was so right!” explains Todd. “I actually worked in financial services for four years where I made significantly more money. But I wasn’t nearly as happy, so my wife and I decided returning to the classroom made good sense.” Of course, the Jackson High

School science students are beneficiaries of Todd’s career decision as are the dozen student teachers he mentored.

Not only is Todd rewarded by everyday interaction with his students, he’s convinced being around teenagers keeps him younger and healthier. “Science is actually a relatively easy subject to teach. Regardless of your background, science involves some aspect of your life. So, I can come up with examples that touch a chord with most kids,” says the 24-year teaching veteran. “It feels good to know I’ve made a positive impact on their lives. I’ve been teaching long enough that I meet former students on every trip to the grocery store or almost anywhere in the community. Then, we often discuss some obscure thing they remember that happened in

class. That’s pretty cool. It’s remarkable to think at least four of my former students are medical doctors, dozens are physical therapists, some are pharmacists and so many are in other science-related careers. I’m not taking credit for their success, but it is extremely satisfying to see the heights they have reached and knowing I was present when they were first introduced to some of the concepts.”

Todd is a self-proclaimed family man who enjoys family activities with his wife, three daughters and a new grandson. He is an avid reader and likes to fish. He’s also masterful on the grill and says, “I grill at least three times a week—even in the winter. And, I admit I have gotten pretty good at it, though I will never match my wife who is truly a gourmet cook.”

Todd Marler finds teaching science easy because it touches everyone's lives.





Jake Goff believes technology broadens the spectrum of opportunities for entrepreneurs willing to accept the challenge.

I Like the Small Town Brand

“All I really wanted to do was get out of this small town. To find what, I wasn’t sure,” reflects Jake Goff.

After earning both his high school diploma and associate degree in 2007, he was well on his way out of Farmington. He moved to St. Louis, attended the University of Missouri–St. Louis and earned a Bachelor of Arts in English.

“I was one of the first to graduate high school and MAC at the same time,” recalls Jake. “In retrospect, my feelings are mixed. While I acquired the freedom to gain worldly experiences, I’m not sure my maturity and emotional levels were synced with where I was in this collective process.”

The Internet allowed Jake to continue writing speeches for pastors throughout the U.S., which paid enough for his adventures. His travels took him to Germany with a friend, Amsterdam to work in a youth hostel, and L.A. where he worked in film and studied martial arts with renowned instructor Daniel Inosanto.

Then, without telling anyone, Jake

applied to law school. “It seemed right,” says the recent Saint Louis University law school graduate. “As I stood with my new classmates sizing up one another, I realized I was standing in Joe and Loretta Scott Hall, the very hall named after two local people. Something began to feel right about small town life again.”

He explains, “I believe my law degree did change the way my brain worked. It made me refuse to accept simple answers. I’m a bit more confident that changes can happen. I’m most concerned about making this small community better connected in social and entrepreneurial spheres, and to accomplish those goals, I was sort of forced to become competent enough to overcome some legal hurdles. Further, it has given me a sense—possibly misplaced—that my voice should be heard concerning any matter, political or cultural or whatever, that stirs my soul. I feel emboldened to really share my ideas and demand to, at least, be heard.”

Jake admits, “I like the small town brand. I currently work at my dad’s

law firm, J. Goff Law, where I help with personal injury cases. I also help my sister with design and branding at her ColJac Café. I do a few small projects on the side, which mostly consist of working with local artists and entrepreneurs to build and engage their intended audiences.”

Reconnecting with his local friends brings contentment. “Three of my passions are rooted in relationships with other MAC alumni. I practice martial arts with Rob Baker of Baker’s Academy of Martial Arts. I spend time in the gym with my business partner Blake Stevens, who is a competition bodybuilder. I also make short films, some religious in nature, with Brett Shelton.” Jake invites friends to contact him at goff.jacob@gmail.com.

Jake says he appreciates his education and respects the college’s role in the region. “MAC’s lean and built for functionality rather than ideology,” he says. “It’s exciting to attend classes with faculty who see beyond the classroom, live here and impact our community. We all benefit with MAC so close.”

My Journey Began with PBL

It started with MAC's business club for students, Phi Beta Lambda (PBL). Buddy Alberson participated in PBL and completed associate degrees in medical technology and pre-business administration before transferring to Southeast Missouri State University where, in 2008, he earned his baccalaureate degree and Alternative Certification in Education.

He worked as a radiology technologist before returning to his high school alma mater, Scott County Central School District near Sikeston, as the elementary school computer lab instructor. Soon, he moved to the high school as the district's new technology coordinator, yearbook and Future Business Leaders of America (FBLA) advisor and business instructor.

"That's when I really got invested

in FBLA by expanding the chapter and motivating student participation in district and state leadership conferences." Because of his FBLA success, Buddy was named Missouri FBLA-PBL State Advisor and now helps lead the Missouri FBLA-PBL Professional Division and serves as the National FBLA-PBL Professional Division Vice President.

Buddy is the Missouri Department of Elementary & Secondary Education's new assistant director of data for the Office of Educator Quality, a position he assumed in June. His responsibilities vary. One primary task is the development and implementation of federal statutes, standards and regulations governing all educator licensure development. He also assists with the review and evaluation of

educator licensure and development programs with a particular emphasis on analysis and interpretation of performance data. Buddy prepares reports and data summaries for the department's executive leadership team, the State Board of Education and other stakeholders.

"MAC is where I launched my career."

As a former student and advisor, Buddy is well-acquainted with the demands and rewards of FBLA and PBL. While at MAC, he held PBL leadership roles, earned three PBL first-place statewide honors, two national PBL honors, and won a Missouri Community College Association Student Leadership Award.

"I wasn't just a number. MAC is where I launched my career," says Buddy. "Business instructors Mrs. Barks and Mr. McMillian got me involved in PBL and student organizations where I learned how to multitask, become an effective leader and improve my public speaking. They challenged me to exceed my limits, ignited my interest in learning and cultivated my professional development. Whenever I represented MAC at state and national conferences, I was impressed when the administration showed it cared about my PBL involvement and successes. All these experiences positioned me where I am today at the Missouri Department of Elementary & Secondary Education."

Buddy enjoys going to the gym, leisure time with friends, and following the St. Louis Cardinals. He also enjoys the outdoors and occasionally returns to help on the family farm in Vanduser in Scott County. Buddy's former classmates may contact him at buddyalberson@sbcglobal.net.

Buddy Alberson poses with FBLA students at a competition.



Touched by Autism

Hope fills the hearts of those involved with Visions of Hope, a vocational and social training program for young adults living with autism in the St. Francois County area. Co-founders Luann (Crossett) and Dave Honerkamp invite families and individuals whose lives are touched by autism to explore what Visions of Hope offers.

Luann, a 2001 graduate, completed her BS in Education with certification in K–12 cross-categorical disabilities. She has 13 years of experience as a special education teacher and job coach for people with developmental disabilities. Dave, MAC 1983–85, earned his BS in Education, then taught and coached. Since 1993, he has been employed at PASCO Inc. in St. Louis. For Luann, Dave and their good friend Jessica Harmon, Visions of Hope is an incredibly personal undertaking. Luann and Dave are godparents to Jessica’s sons, Garrett and Morgan, who have been diagnosed with autism spectrum disorder.

About four years ago, Luann read “Who Will Care for Dana,” an article depicting the challenges faced by a 21-year-old special needs student as she prepared to leave the classroom and enter a world of uncertainty. Luann says, “Immediately, Garrett and Morgan came to mind. They soon would be like Dana and ill-equipped for life as young adults. There is so little post-graduation help for people with autism since most services and government-funded programs abruptly cease after high school.” Luann remembers turning to Dave to say, “We’ve got to do something now so there will be a place where Garrett and Morgan will be safe and able to live full and productive lives.” With that, the Visions of Hope journey began.

To give perspective, Luann and Dave share, “CDC statistics indicate approximately 1 in 68 children is identified with autism spectrum disorder, and it’s about 4.5 times more common among boys than among girls. Currently,

we have about 214 students in St. Francois and the immediate surrounding counties. When they graduate in the next several years, they will need job skills.”

Enter Dress 2 Impress, Visions of Hope’s companion venture, an upscale resale shop in downtown Farmington. The resale shop is a training platform where “interns”—young adults with autism—gain vocational, retail, social and customer service skills. “We’re talking with school districts and businesses to see how we can work together,” says Luann. “Autistic individuals function well in the workplace when their skills are appropriately matched to the task. Unfortunately, social skills often present challenges to finding a good employment fit.”

There’s a community angle, too. The Interview Clothing Voucher Program

provides free interview attire to local citizens—male and female—who cannot afford proper clothing for their job search process. The public can support Visions of Hope by shopping at Dress 2 Impress, donating professional clothing or cash, or volunteering at the store.”

David adds, “We hope each person gets chances to use his or her God-given talents to lead the gratifying and productive lives God has designed for them. If we provide opportunities for those we meet at Visions of Hope, our ultimate goals will be realized.”

To learn more about Visions of Hope, contact Luann at lhon@live.com or (573) 915-3281, Dave at (573) 701-3002, or visit its Facebook page or www.vhd2i.org.

Dave and Luann Honerkamp and Jessica Harmon say Visions of Hope is a community resource for families impacted by autism.





New Athletic Director Mike Overman, Coach Hal Loughary and Gerry Pollard talk MAC sports.



Gerry Pollard explains the call to Coach Bill Self.

He'll Always be 'Coach' to Me

"We had outstanding players and leadership by Coach Loughary," reflects former baseball player Gerry Pollard, MAC 1980–82. "We were close-knit, did float trips together and followed MAC basketball. Once we packed thirteen people into my brother's van to go to the Three Rivers game. All was good until the ice storm hit. We pooled all our money for a hotel room. And, that wasn't the worst part! Nobody wanted to call Coach—collect—to tell him we'd be late for practice."

Gerry wonders who remembers the "Imitate Coach Sechrest" contests. "The baseball players always participated," he explains. "I did my best imitation, pacing the sidelines and pulling up my socks. Then, I executed the ultimate Coach Sechrest . . . I drop kicked the basketball, and it landed on the upper level by his

corner office. That won me a tee shirt and a conversation with Coach Sechrest the next day."

Gerry transferred to SEMO, completed his criminal justice degree, and worked in law enforcement in the St. Charles area. He spent 18 years on the road as a corporal and field training officer and then joined the SWAT team. In 2005, he moved to the St. Charles City Police with a rank of captain and retired in 2007. "Police work forced me to grow up," he asserts. "I realized the seriousness of what the position entails, the real meaning of the oath I took, and that I was never guaranteed I'd return home after my shift."

Now in his second career, Gerry is officiating college basketball. "Almost anyone in law enforcement needs to moonlight. My brother got me some

high school games and things developed from there. It allowed me to exit law enforcement and return to the sports arena that was always a part of me," says the NCAA referee. "Getting hired in the Missouri Valley Conference in 1993 was the first big break. But, what really set me up is when I was hired by the Big 12 and Conference USA in 1996. That year, I attended a camp in Jonesboro where I finished #1 out of 101 referees and that propelled me to where I am today." He considers some of his career highlights to be 14 years in the NCAA, four regional tournament assignments and calling the last Missouri-Kansas game. Gerry's officiating dream is to officiate in the NCAA Final Four tournament.

At the August Athletes of Yesteryear reunion, Gerry shared entertaining stories about his NCAA work and about coaches such as Norm Stewart and Bobby Knight. In his role as coordinator of men's basketball officials for the GLVC, AMC, SLIAC and Region 16 conferences, Gerry assigns officials for MAC basketball games.

Gerry reflects, "For me, one important memory is the manner in which the community put its arms around us and embraced us as MAC student athletes. Another is the utmost respect I will always have for Coach Loughary because of all he did for his baseball players as we matured into young adults." Of life's experiences, especially at MAC, he repeats Maya Angelou's powerful, yet simple words, ". . . people will forget what you said, people will forget what you did, but people will never forget how you made them feel."



Breathtaking Gardens

They might have grown good friends and even planted the seeds of their own marriage during their time at MAC, but now, almost 40 years later, they're growing a small botanical garden that takes up much of their property in Ste. Genevieve.

Kathy (Eisenbeis) and Dave Armbruster reflect on their time at MAC and where they are today. "MAC is where we made lots of good friends. It was the '70s, what else can I say?" chuckles Dave who played baseball for Coach Loughary. "I had many good teammates like Dave Tiefaneur, Larry Thurman, Danny Simily, Steve Thebeau and some guys from Canada, Wisconsin and North Dakota. In my manufacturing and construction technology program, Bob Civey, John Kecec and Jim Hrouda were good teachers who took an interest in knowing us as individuals and really cared that we

"In February, our basement turns into a planting area with 34 grow lights and lots and lots of seeds."

did well." For 35 years, Dave has been employed at Mississippi Lime in Ste. Genevieve. He's worked in management and is currently in the special project acquisitions division for the world-class producer of calcium products, serving North American as well as world markets.

Although she completed her dental assisting degree in 1978, Kathy explains, "MAC wasn't my original plan. I was considering art school when a friend mentioned the dental assisting program. Immediately, I was sold on the 'MAC feel' with its pretty campus, caring instructors and new friends. After I graduated, Dave and I were married." Kathy worked her first 18 years as a chairside assistant and her last 13 years as an orthodontic

assistant. She retired in 2013.

Gardening is their new fascination. To make space for a patio where Kathy could plant some flowers, their above-ground pool and deck were dismantled. In three years, the Armbruster's yard transformed into a local botanical garden adorned with flowers, water features, a small greenhouse, planting shed and a grandchildren's garden area. Although Dave says Kathy is the gardener and takes little credit for the stunning flower displays, he builds the architecturally attractive landscaping features.

Part of gardening is sharing and experimenting. "I just can't throw flowers away so I plant them in my neighbors' yards or give them away," explains



Kathy and Dave Armbruster enjoy the beauty of their backyard.

Kathy. "I generally don't do vegetables, but Dave's friends asked me to start some tomatoes and peppers. Then, my daughter challenged me when she said, 'Mom, you should really grow your plants from seeds.' So, in February, our basement turns into a planting area with 34 grow lights and lots and lots of seeds."

Creating habitat for monarch butterflies is their newest garden endeavor. Dave built a monarch station and Kathy planted monarch-friendly plants, like milkweed, which are needed for the caterpillars' survival. They celebrate when caterpillars and butterflies emerge.

Although the original small gardens have turned into a full-time job for Kathy, the gardens are a place to enjoy solitude and beauty right in the backyard. Even community members enjoyed the Armbrusters' gardens during this year's Ste. Genevieve Garden Walk.

Kathy and Dave enjoy family activities with their children and grandchildren.

Community Celebrates Alumni

MAC Foundation's Community Ladies Luncheon is an annual favorite for community members, donors and alumni. Guests are mesmerized as students share heartfelt stories of MAC's role in their education. While the event celebrates all alumni, specific recognition is given to female graduates making contributions in their career fields. This year's recipients work in health care.

"I loved every minute of my LPN and RN classes. I tell new nurses to always listen to the patient. It's one concept that really stuck with me," says **Sue Webb**, a 1988 LPN and 2004 RN graduate. "I'm proud to make a positive difference in the lives of my patients and their families." For 27 years, Sue's worked at Parkland Health Center where she received its 2009 Employee of the Year Award. Sue tells of a special MAC moment, "It was an unforgettable honor when our class carried the flag at the LPN student nurses convention. At this time, MAC still had 100 percent passing of State Boards."

Gina (Nicholson) Heberlie, LPN 1989-91, says, "I'm very proud to be a family nurse practitioner at Midwest

Health Group in Farmington. Making it through the LPN program was an accomplishment for me. I'll never forget Mrs. June Harris telling me I had to withdraw from the nursing program. She suggested I re-apply for the next class. It was a hard lesson to learn. I needed to grow up in order to complete LPN school." Gina also completed her RN, BSN and MSN-FNP degrees. In addition to being a mother of four, wife, and coach, she is also a mentor to MAC nursing students. She is the current president of the local chapter of Southeast Nurses of Advanced Practice.

A basketball scholarship enticed **Teresa (Johnson) Skaggs** to MAC. After earning her AA degree in 1988, she completed her psychology and business degrees at Missouri State University. Teresa works at Clayton Sleep Institute where she recruits research subjects, coordinates sleep study research, and develops home sleep testing and telemedicine for the sleep physicians and pulmonologist. She says, "Basketball remains important. Bill Bradley and John LaBruyere were excellent coaches who taught me about basketball and life. I drew

inspiration from them and tried to impact young players' lives." Teresa is a former MAC Foundation board member, a Magic Basketball Academy board member, and youth volleyball and basketball program volunteer.

Connie D. Simmons, M.D., accepted a basketball scholarship and terms it the best decision she ever made. "I was Connie, not student #124. My teachers took a personal interest in me and challenged me," recalls Connie. "My dream was to be a doctor, but no one in my family was a physician or even went to college so I thought it would stay a dream. MAC was invaluable to my development." She praises Dr. Rhonda Gamble, Ms. Jenny Gunn and Mr. Elvis Clark as standout teachers. Connie completed her AA in 1984, then her medical degree at the University of Missouri School of Medicine and her pediatric residency at St. Louis University. She is a pediatric hospitalist at Ranken Jordan Pediatric Bridge Hospital in St. Louis and cares for newborns to young adults with complicated medical conditions.

Congratulations, honorees.

MAC Foundation Board members pose with Community Ladies Luncheon honorees. Pictured are Andy Buchanan, Steve Kurtz, Sue Webb, Gina Heberlie, Teresa Skaggs, Connie D. Simmons and Kevin Thurman.





Katherine Rouse and her son Tanner enjoy time together in The Creamery at Arcadia Academy.

Faith, Hard Work & Family

Katherine (Olyer) Rouse smiles when she tells her story about Arcadia Academy, her family business in the Arcadia Valley area. "I'm amazed by the stories surrounding my parents' purchase of this place," says Katherine. "Back in 1999, the headlines read 'Large Mormon Family Buys Catholic Girls School in Arcadia.' Well, it's accurate, but somehow doesn't tell the whole story. The academy was bought on faith and is a story of faith, hard work and family."

She tells how she and her mother left her family in Utah to come here to work

on the dilapidated property, formerly the Ursuline Academy. "We had little running water and no heat. On cold nights, we heated bricks to keep us warm," recalls the mother of three. "My mother was determined. She ground wheat kernels—as we do today—and began baking bread out of necessity. And that's the start of Thee Abbey Kitchen, our restaurant and bakery."

When the economy declined, Katherine's parents closed the academy. She and her husband were living and working in St. Louis. "It was just awful. We worked in different areas of the

city, different shifts and never got to see each other. All I ever wanted was to be married and have my husband and kids close. It just wasn't happening," she says. "Then one day, for some reason, Darwin and I happened to be together in the car on I-270. I turned to him and said, 'We need to buy the academy from my parents.' And, that's how we became owners. Darwin and I met, worked and were married here, so it's logical we live and raise our family here. For us, work and home are one."

The Rouse family radiates family togetherness, love, faith and hard work. The academy has beautiful grounds and is home to a church, reception hall, recording studio, carriage rides and tours, a B&B and entertainment. Thee Abbey Kitchen and The Creamery are its most celebrated attractions. Some boast they serve the best-ever baked goods and ice cream.

Katherine, a 2003 graduate, was captivated by her MAC business classes and advanced her degree at the University of Missouri–St. Louis. "I never really liked the homework angle," she says, "but I really excelled when I did the hands-on stuff. I teach my kids the same way. They help count money when we reconcile cash drawers. They're using their money to order some items for our upcoming gift shop. They'll buy, set the price and sell to learn about business."

Katherine values her husband's calculated risk-taking skills which have generated new avenues to expand their business. "We're not afraid of hard work," shares Katherine. "As a matter of fact, the gift shop should be ready soon, and we just purchased nine bungalows in the area which, when rehabbed, will be vacation rentals." Katherine and Darwin agree, "Arcadia Academy has been the bedrock of the community since established in 1847. We've been able to be good stewards and return this remarkable place as a meaningful venue in our community for everyone to enjoy." Learn more at www.arcadiavalleyacademy.com.



Meet Lisa Umfleet, MAC's new trustee.

- **Lisa Umfleet**, MAC 1991–92, is a local pharmacist and Bonne Terre resident. In July, she was appointed to the Mineral Area College Board of Trustees to complete the term vacated by Sally Parker-Nash. She is a 1996 St. Louis College of Pharmacy graduate. She is the owner of Parkland HealthMart Pharmacy in Desloge and is co-owner of the Fredericktown and Ironton locations. Lisa served as an adjunct faculty member for St. Louis College of Pharmacy and Southern Illinois University–Edwardsville. She served on the North County R-1 School Board and is active in several professional associations, including the Missouri Pharmacy Association.
- **Mary Fox**, MAC 1975–77, transferred to the University of Missouri–Rolla where she earned her BS in Chemical Engineering. Mary says some of her best classes were with Dr. Painter and Dr. Chang who she considered exceptional instructors. Mary worked for Westinghouse and ABB Inc. She explains, “My main

focus moved into environmental management. It was an exciting time as regulations were coming out. It was a challenge to get manufacturing process changes in place and convince employees and management why the changes were necessary. Safety performance was moving into a company objective, and I got to add that to my tool bag.” Now Mary enjoys her safety manager position at Piralal Glass in Park Hills.

- After 20 years, **Janet Porter** retired from MAC’s IT Department. Janet started as a student in the Workforce Preparation for Women program which focused on vocational education. She graduated with honors with an AS in Office Systems Technology, earned the 1998 Outstanding Vocational Student Award, and completed her Certified Help Desk Professional certification. As CIS Help Desk Assistant, Janet provided support for employees and students and held multiple Classified Staff leadership positions. She is a PTK member and past president of Phi Beta Lambda, and a lifetime member of Girl Scouts serving in multiple leadership roles. Janet is very proud to have co-chaired the quality initiative paperless project by assisting with the creation of Adobe fillable forms and MAC’s electronic forms. Janet says, “I learned something new most every day, and I loved sharing that knowledge with students and staff. I will truly miss the lifetime friendships I made.”

- **Sean Pryor**, MAC 1993–95, was named the associate head coach at New Mexico Highlands after spending the past five seasons as an assistant coach at Division I Chicago State. After MAC, Sean played basketball at Oregon State University and in professional leagues in France and Puerto Rico. He returned to MAC as an assistant coach from 2006–10.

- **Barry Wilfong**, MAC 1979–82, played basketball for Coach Sechrest. Some of his teammates included Mark Heisel, Randy Detring, Scott Faulkner,

Russ Schoene, Maurice Mosby and LeRoy Bequette. He attended UMR where he earned his engineering management degree with a mechanical preference. He worked in industry prior to joining MAC’s staff last fall as the director of facilities. “It’s been fun to return and be a part of MAC again. Being reacquainted with the sports programs and enjoying all the extra-curricular activities like music, theater and arts council events is great,” says Barry. “It’s amazing what MAC students are able to do in the classroom and for our community.” Barry and his wife, Barbara (Hahn), have three adult children.

- **Philip Willis**, 2007 LPN and 2008 RN graduate, received a 2016 Mercy Hospital DAISY Award in St. Louis. A patient’s husband nominated Philip for his extraordinary thoughtfulness and sensitive care, stating “Philip helped my wife on our son’s wedding day. She was hospitalized and could not attend the wedding. Philip did his best to help her so she could spend some nice pre-wedding time with our son and his bride. Philip went way beyond his nursing duties to help make this day very memorable for my wife.”

- **Gil Kennon**, MAC 1972–73, visited with Governor Nixon at the summer Missouri Highway Patrol

Gil Kennon and his granddaughter pose with Governor Jay Nixon at the ceremony.



commencement. MAC and the Highway Patrol have a training partnership, and as MAC's dean of career & technical education, Gil is involved in the commencement ceremony.

- **Dr. Stephanie Knebel** is this year's recipient of the PTK Distinguished Teaching Award. Nearly 300 PTK members had the opportunity to nominate and then vote for the recipient of this award. One student noted, "When our class couldn't grasp the concept she was trying to teach, Dr. Knebel went home and revised her lesson to make sure we understood. She made taking a summer course not only interesting, she made it engaging and super cool. I know being cool isn't a general MAC syllabus requirement, but it sure helped with retention and application of the required materials." The award was presented at the Fall 2016 PTK Induction.

- At the annual Missouri Community College Association convention, four

MAC individuals received recognition for their contributions to Missouri's community college mission. Dean of Students **Jean Merrill-Doss** received the Senior Service Award for her 20+ years of service. **Gregg Garland** earned the MoWINs Grant Partnership Award for his instrumental work with MoWINs projects. Student **Christian DeShazo** received the Student Leadership Award for his campus involvement, leadership skills and academic standing. **Richard Flotron**, one of only two statewide selections, received the Administrative Professional Leadership Award which recognizes exemplary leadership practices within the college and throughout the community. Congratulations to the deserving award winners.

- **Mineral Area Council on the Arts** brought Colombian folk dancing powerhouse Grupo Atlántico to the MAC Fine Arts Theater. Using music,



Grupo Atlántico performed at MAC in October.

rhythms, costumes and dance, the St. Louis-based ensemble shared the Hispanic heritage of the Caribbean and coastal regions of Colombia, South America.

Bieser, Lollar New Hall of Fame Inductees

The MAC Athletic Department and St. Francois County Rotary Club proudly welcome Steve Bieser and Tim Lollar, former baseball players for Coach Hal Loughary, into the Mineral Area College Athletic Hall of Fame. The ceremony is December 10 at The Rotary Shoot-Out in the Sechrest Field House at approximately 8:00 p.m.

Steve, a native of Perryville, played in 1987, then transferred to SEMO. He was drafted by the Philadelphia Phillies in the 32nd round and made it to the majors after eight years in the minor leagues as primarily a utility player. His major league debut with the New York Mets was in 1997, playing 47 games. The following year, he signed with the Pittsburgh Pirates and played 13 more major league games. His

career continued in the minors and finished with the Memphis Redbirds in 2001. Then, he coached at St. John Vianney High School in St. Louis where his teams won two Missouri State Championships. As the head baseball coach at Southeast Missouri State University from 2013–16, the Redhawks won three outright Ohio Valley Conference Championships, one Ohio Valley Conference Tournament Championship, and appeared in the 2016 NCAA Regional. This June, Steve was named head baseball coach for the University of Missouri–Columbia.

Tim, a left-handed pitcher from Farmington, played in 1974–76 before transferring to the University of Arkansas, where he was drafted by the New York Yankees in the fourth

round of the 1978 MLB Draft. Tim's major league debut was in June 1980 with the New York Yankees. In 1981, he was traded to the San Diego Padres. He played four seasons and had success with his career-best 16 games, pitching several shut-out games and helping the Padres reach the 1984 World Series. He was named starting pitcher for a National League Championship Series and the World Series. Prior to his 1987 retirement from baseball, Tim played for the Chicago White Sox and Boston Red Sox, and finished his career in the Detroit and St. Louis organizations. Tim resides in Lakewood, CO, where he is a PGA professional and golf instructor at Lakewood Country Club.

Steve and Tim are also members of the NJCAA Region 16 Hall of Fame.

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December 7 • 6:30 PM
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**WINTER CHORAL
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SWEETER MUSIC**

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