

# 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 2017



# TO OUR READERS



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Dear Alumni & Friends,

Traditionally every October, the University of Missouri hosts the presidents and chancellors of Missouri's community colleges to discuss with the administration of the University of Missouri System and representatives of each of the four universities in the System opportunities for all of us to work together to improve higher education in our state.

During our meeting, Dr. Garnett Stokes, provost of the University of Missouri, announced great news for community college graduates. She outlined three major initiatives that will encourage our graduates to attend the university. First, both English Composition courses will transfer as English courses and apply towards the 42-Hour General Education block. Second, the university will dedicate about \$250,000 annually for recruitment, placement and intrusive advising specifically for community college transfer students. Third, the university's Missouri Land Grant initiative will cover the difference in costs for students with full Pell Grants.

Because about two-thirds of community college students qualify for the full Pell Grant, we are grateful to the University of Missouri System's new leadership for the time and effort dedicated to reducing obstacles for our graduates to transfer.

With great sadness, I report that Dr. Don VanHerck, who served as a faithful member of the Board of Trustees for over four decades, passed away in October. He was not only our longest-serving, elected trustee, he was one of the longest-serving, elected trustees for all Missouri community colleges. His tenure began shortly after classes started on our current campus. MAC benefitted greatly from his passion, leadership and knowledge of the college. In addition to the governance of the college, he prioritized the well-being of employees and students while serving as a liaison between the campus and the community. Not only did I consider him as my role model when I began here, I also considered Dr. VanHerck as the patriarch of the Mineral Area College family. He shall be missed.

The Enhancement Grant Matching Gift program returns this year. The \$3-for-\$1 match dramatically increases the value of your gifts. Over the years, your contributions have leveraged thousands of dollars in funding for the Career & Technical Education Division. It is especially important given our current funding limitations. See page 12 for information.

On a sports note, the Lady Cards volleyball team has had a phenomenal season. Congratulations to the team and Coach Tim Copeland who is the Region 16 Coach of the Year. Thanks to all the community members who attended the matches to show support. Also, remember Homecoming is Saturday, February 3, 2018.

Sincerely,

Dr. Steven Kurtz, President



Community members and students enjoy lots of competitive sports action. Come out, mingle with friends and watch MAC teams compete.

# FEATURES

- 2 I've Come a Long Way**  
Transitioning from military to civilian life brings challenges.
- 8 We Decided to "Be the Change"**  
Instructors spark a campus food pantry concept.
- 12 Enhancement Grant Campaign**  
December 31 is the deadline to earn a \$3-for-\$1 match on Enhancement Grant donations.
- 20 Had More in Mind for Me**  
Bringing religion and mixed martial arts together helps change lives.

## Departments

- 2 Around Campus**
- 12 Thank You**
- Donor Honor Roll**
- Giving Envelope**
- 17 Alumni**
- 26 Through the Grapevine**

## On the Cover

**Next Stop: NJCAA Volleyball National Tournament.** Superlative play and an unblemished 34-0 season record earned the Lady Cards volleyball team a return trip to the NJCAA National Tournament. While athleticism is a significant component, the team's chemistry and a unified vision contributed to its remarkable success.

# I've Come a Long Way

**D**earsey Ratliff was successful in high school, married his high school sweetheart and purchased his own house before he was 20. He had goals, dreams and ambitions. He joined the Marines and spent eight years serving our country, the last two in Iraq.

When he returned home, things weren't the same. "The transition from military to civilian life was tough," he says. "I just couldn't adjust. I worked as a journeyman and was laid off when the economy tanked. I spent four years in unfulfilling jobs. I was anxious and easily frustrated. My drive and my purpose were gone. I felt detached, unstable and mundane. I was a Marine with leadership and survival skills. Why was this happening?"

Dearsey was diagnosed with post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD). "I was treated for depression and other PTSD symptoms," he explains. "But, for me, the medicines seemed to deepen my depression. Whether at work or home, my feelings of hopelessness were never ending. My wife's commitment through all this—the nightmares, depression and fighting in my sleep—was unwavering. She had many reasons to give up, but we are working together to figure this out."

He recalls one particular incident, "I drove my wife to an appointment, slept in the waiting room, and drove her home. Later, I didn't remember any of it. That very frightening moment was my call to action. I gave up my prescriptions and made the decision to go to college." Though the GI Bill paid for school expenses, his family couldn't make it without his paycheck. Finally, Dearsey's perseverance paid off when he connected with Vocational Rehabilitation which provided some financial assistance so he could attend.

"College wasn't an easy start either," he recalls. "My test scores placed me in low-level classes, but I stuck with



**Dearsey Ratliff trained Sprocket to be a certified service animal.**

it. Then, I landed an internship at Dix Garden Center/MCII. It was springtime, and it's amazing how happy people are when they're buying flowers and vegetables. Soon, I felt my eyes were opening to see things differently, and my mind felt free to think more clearly. Things started to be meaningful again. College and work provided professional environments that rekindled my sense of self-worth. The change has been like night and day. MAC's been very

instrumental in my rediscovering myself."

Although he still grapples with PTSD, Dearsey's life is navigating in a good direction. He volunteers by serving the Leadington VFW Post 5741 as its senior vice commander. He anticipates a December graduation. If plans fall into place, his part-time Dix/MCII position working in the retail store and at the sheltered workshop will possibly materialize into a full-time position.

# Quest for the National Tournament

Sophomores Emily Eaton and Jane Kickham were excited to begin the fall semester, especially volleyball.

They're anxious to make a return trip to the NJCAA National Tournament where they finished tenth last year. Team cohesion, they believe, is a significant factor in their success. "We're all great friends on and off the court. We work really hard in practice and then have fun together later," explains Jane of Springfield.

Last year's success served as a good recruitment tool. "We were so close last year," reflects Emily of Bonne Terre. "The national tournament experience gave us sophomores a better understanding of what we need to do. From day one, we knew there was no room for complacency, and all our efforts are focused on the big prize which is the national tournament."

Jane and Emily say, "We're hungrier and more focused as a team. Coach

Copeland's set expectations, and we utilize every practice to the fullest. The freshmen came here expecting to be on a nationally-ranked team. This year, we're playing as a cohesive unit rather than six individual players on the court. It's exciting to represent MAC, our community, and really, our state at the national tournament."

Scholarships were deciding factors. Emily, an elementary education major, explains, "Scholarships are truly a big blessing. They reduce some stress so I can focus on my studies. One thing I absolutely love about MAC is how everyone makes the students feel comfortable, and every teacher strives to give me the extra help and guidance I need to be successful. I chose elementary education because I just love the idea that I could make a difference in kids' lives. Ideally, I'd like to teach first grade and also coach volleyball and basketball."

"From day one, we knew there was no room for complacency, and all efforts are focused on the big prize..."

Jane, a marketing major, adds, "I wanted to play college volleyball, and a scholarship influenced where I would continue my education. I'm very grateful for my scholarship. Not only have I been able to continue my education and play the sport I love, but I've also met some incredible people and made memories that will last a lifetime. I'm very thankful for the sense of community we experience here." Last year, Jane earned 1st Team recognition at the conference and district levels. This year, she was named NJCAA D1 Volleyball Player of the Week and earned All-Region 16 honors.

**MAC volleyball teammates Jane Kickham and Emily Eaton leaving the field house.**



# Music Makes Me Happy

Music brings joy, a sense of purpose and feelings of accomplishment to Corben Crites. He sings for pure enjoyment. Though a communications major, Corben is upsizing his vocal music experience and considers his music classes relaxing and a nice detour from other classes.

"MAC's choir is a totally amazing experience," says the baritone. "High school was great, but here I'm learning even more than I expected. Instructors take a personal interest in each of us. And, because we share similar interests and really want to be here, everything we do achieves a higher level."

Corben credits Director of Choirs Harry Cecil as the foundation for the gratification he gets from vocal music.

"Mr. Cecil is just an awesome, awesome person who makes you fall in love with music!" he exclaims. "He's so in tune with us. His music selections are incredible and relatable. When people's emotions are conveyed, music is so meaningful for the singers and audiences. His music knowledge and insights are totally amazing. Then, besides teaching, he creates a safe place for us to share opinions, agree or disagree, discuss topics, have conversations and develop an understanding of many things."

The MAC Singers Lock-in is a fun-filled overnight encounter where students immerse themselves in music and team building activities. Corben says, "It solidifies the group's unity and prepares us for great performances. For me, I can't

wait for us to perform Handel's *Messiah*. It's the majesty of music."

Corben plans to transfer to Truman State and is contemplating a public relations career in the entertainment industry, specifically the movies, television or video gaming areas. "The A+ Program benefits definitely attracted me to MAC," says the freshman. "I'm glad I'm here because I saw the adjustments my brother had going to a larger university. I'm not quite ready for a big move. I'm totally okay with being close to home, meeting new people and using MAC as a transition to Truman." Corben is the recipient of the Farmington Kiwanis Mark Griggs Memorial Scholarship and Student of the Year award.

Corben Crites enjoys MAC's campus environment and the opportunities with the choir program.



# I Want to Be Your Nurse

Even without knowing it, the compassion of a nurse permeated Jordan Wadlow's psyche at a young age. "All my life, I saw my mother come home after an exhausting shift, and I could tell she had been put through the ringer a couple of times," says Jordan. "But she always had a smile on her face and told me about how she impacted one—just one—patient for the better that day. That's when I knew I wanted to be a nurse."

The RN student asserts, "Nursing is beyond what I could ever imagine! From my mom, I learned you can have a phenomenal day because patients' families count on you being there for them...even if a patient dies, you're there to celebrate, rather than mourn, that person's life with loved ones. From my instructors and the rigors of the program, I'm discovering what real-world nursing is. My head is always popping with new information. Now I understand that end-of-life care is as important as the beginning of life. Our instructors not only teach skills, assessments and critical thinking, they define the difference between a good nurse and a great nurse, and what it takes to get there. And that's compassion toward our patients and their situations."

Jordan says, "Our program is intense, but I know it's for a good reason. Day in and day out, I am studying, quizzing, reviewing, and occasionally even crying and wondering if it's all worth it. The answer is always unmistakably 'yes.' In these two years, I've learned more than I could have ever expected and that our instructors are totally here for us. To establish our confidence, we are pushed and tested to replicate the intensity and stresses of real-life nursing. I've learned to be selfless—and also assertive. I understand the importance

of compassion, empathy and building relationships when working with patients and loved ones. I want to be the best nurse I can be."

The Buck-A-Month scholarship recipient says, "Oh my goodness, this scholarship helps immensely. Without the kindness and generosity of people who give the scholarship, I wouldn't even be here. Thank you! Thank you!" She adds, "I want readers to know my life's experienced more downs than ups. Things haven't been handed to me. It's not been easy, but I'm proud I've

worked hard to get where I am."

Of MAC, the Park Hills sophomore explains, "MAC gives me a kick start in life and for my career because I can access cost-effective education close to home. My instructors and peers are helping shape the framework for my future. Our instructors are so extraordinary and always have time for us whether it's a classroom or personal matter. MAC's nursing reputation is undisputed. I know I'm getting the best training that's available, and I want to be your nurse."



**Jordan Wadlow says she would absolutely love to specialize in women's health.**

# New Faculty Start Fall Semester

Four full-time faculty were welcomed for the fall semester in the allied health, science and music departments. Each brings a unique brand of enthusiasm and dimension to their respective departments, colleagues and students.

The Allied Health Department has two new instructors, ADN instructor Melissa N. Helm (Farmington) and LPN instructor Carla Lay (Fredericktown). Both are 2014 MAC nursing program graduates and hold RN and BSN degrees.

Melissa says, "MAC's nursing program is highly reputable in the region. So when I heard of this opening, I had to apply. I simply could not pass up this wonderful opportunity. To the classroom, I plan to bring inspiration and motivation to the students. It wasn't too long ago that I was a MAC student myself, and here I am now instructing future nurses. When the knowledge and

skill sets learned here are combined with personal dedication and hard work, the opportunities for graduates are endless."

Carla worked as a secretary at a correctional facility before entering the nursing profession. "I've taught nursing clinicals, and I truly enjoy watching the students learn. At an LPN graduation and pinning, I was gratified by students' accomplishments and proud to have played a role in their journey," says Carla. "I feel my positive attitude and life experiences will help instill this mindset and keep students focused on their goal of becoming a nurse. Through educating others, I continue to educate myself."

Zoe Geist (Imperial) taught college biology for 15 years in the St. Louis area. She earned her bachelor's and master's in biology at University of Central Missouri. She says, "Community college teaching is a great pathway to engage students in biology whether they

are majors or not. I find education in biology to be an important tool to guide students to appreciate science as part of their future decisions." She belongs to the National Association of Biology Teachers and is a Missouri Stream Team volunteer. She incorporates Stream Team activities in her courses so students learn stewardship and citizen science related to stream ecology.

Dr. Bennett Wood earned his bachelor's and master's degrees from Southern Illinois University-Edwardsville and his doctorate from the University of Texas at Austin. Prior to joining the MAC faculty as the director of jazz studies, he was director of Texas Lutheran University's Jazz Band and a lecturer at Texas State University. He holds membership in the Jazz Education Network, Texas Music Educators Association and North American Saxophone Alliance.

**New faculty are Carla Lay, Melissa N. Helm, Dr. Bennett Wood and Zoe Geist.**





The Career & Technical Division team: Administrative Assistant Erin Sites, Dean Roger McMillian and Executive Administrative Assistant Cheri Marler.

## McMillian Named Dean of Career & Technical Education

Roger McMillian, a familiar face and 20-year business and computer networking instructor, is the new dean of the Career & Technical Education Division (CTE), filling a vacancy left by Gil Kennon's retirement. As dean, he is responsible for 39 full-time faculty and 143 adjunct faculty members in the CTE division, which includes such programs as nursing, business education, computer information services, law enforcement and manufacturing technology.

In 1997, Roger joined MAC's faculty and later served in leadership positions for business education, computer networking and computer information systems. In 2002, Roger joined the Central Methodist University adjunct faculty teaching on the Park Hills campus. His prior work experience is in education and computer information technology fields.

His contributions to the college's regional accreditation and committee work have been instrumental in strategic plans and academic advisory

and implementation efforts. He says, "My educational background, teaching experiences, and leadership roles here have familiarized me with student, faculty and administrative opportunities and challenges. I am excited to serve as the dean of the Career & Technical Education Division and work with the administrative team on the challenges and opportunities that lie ahead, such as budget shortfalls, review of program offerings, assessment, accreditations and strategic planning. MAC is truly a great institution of higher learning, and I feel privileged to be part of this organization."

He continues, "I believe in the importance of career and technical education at the post-secondary level and care about our students. Since coming to MAC, I have been visible and continuously advocated for and supported the mission of career and technical education in Missouri and have represented MAC by holding offices at the local, state and national levels in the career and technical

education field."

Roger's work in the classroom and with student organizations brought regional and statewide recognition to MAC, the business education programs and Phi Beta Lambda, the student business organization. His honors are many. He twice earned the Missouri Governor's Award for Excellence in Teaching. Other honors include the Missouri Association for Career & Technical Education Post-Secondary Teacher of the Year, the Missouri Phi Beta Lambda Adviser of the Year, and the Missouri Business Education Association's Outstanding Post-Secondary Business Educator. In November, Roger received the 2017 Missouri Community College Association's Senior Service Award.

Roger is a 1984 MAC graduate and holds a Master of Business Administration from Missouri Baptist University, a Master of Science in Education from Southwest Baptist University and a bachelor's degree from Southeast Missouri State University.

# We Decided to "Be the Change"

In college, many of us skipped a few meals or ate ramen noodles to save money to buy a concert ticket or an outfit for a special occasion. Today's college students are skipping meals for other reasons, reasons that negatively impact their academic performance.

It may be surprising to learn that food insecurity is a growing nationwide concern on college campuses. Although it can affect anyone, research indicates first-generation and non-traditional students often struggle the most. Since community colleges offer more affordable options for higher education, they appeal to students with fewer financial resources. The recent recession, coupled with the decline in college funding, shifts more costs to the students and their families, creating additional financial burdens for these

**"It may be surprising to learn that food insecurity is a growing nationwide concern on college campuses."**

populations. Students who give up a job to earn a degree often worry how they'll feed their children and pay the bills, sometimes forcing them to choose between tuition and food.

In 1995, the U.S. Department of Agriculture released its first annual findings on food insecurity, which describes the household's ability to reliably access sufficient quantities of affordable, nutritionally-safe foods. The term "food insecurity" now replaces "hunger" (which is physiological

discomfort) to monitor insecurity levels and identify the contributing factors.

At MAC, instructors have become aware that some students do experience hunger to some degree. Instructors know "going hungry" negatively impacts attendance and academic performance, and it can contribute to depression, obesity, stress and long-term poor health.

This fall, MAC joined the nationwide movement when it opened a campus-based food pantry. Reading instructor Ellen Miller and child development instructor Jennifer Sikes led the charge. They explain, "Food insecurity is an increasing issue on college campuses.

Choir students hosted an in-class food drive for the food pantry.



Research suggests that one in four college students experiences 'extreme' hunger. Many colleges and universities are taking action. Our action plan began as a spark. A CNN article about food insecurity reminded us about the struggles our own students have expressed. Students have told us they were too hungry to concentrate or be attentive in class. A science teacher tells of sneaking tuna or other snacks to students when they were hungry. We began seeing an increase in this need that has been so long overlooked."

**"We received emails from family members of students stating the need for food in their households due to terminal illnesses, finances and other hard times."**

Ellen and Jennifer learned about "outside the classroom" reasons for students' hunger. While lack of money is the obvious, other demands—the loss of a job, unreliable transportation, child care, unexpected bills, auto repairs and illnesses—create financial shortfalls. A single mother who is a full-time student and works two part-time jobs to provide for her family even said sheer exhaustion was a contributing factor.

After much research and speaking with students who battle food insecurity, Ellen and Jennifer decided to "be the change" and partnered with Chi Alpha, a student campus ministry. After much preparation, fundraising

**MAC employees held a special chili and soup fundraiser for the food pantry.**



## Back at MAC

Kaitlin Courtway explains, "I attended MAC and then transferred to Mizzou. I planned to be a lawyer for children so I could be a voice for those who needed an advocate. While at Mizzou, doors just seemed to close. So, I asked God for direction. He spoke to my heart, and it was clear He called me to teach and work with the food ministries. I was 20 years old, a little scared, but ready to go wherever He wanted me to serve. That was my Jesus moment! Opportunities led me back to, of all places, MAC."

She returned to MAC and enrolled in education classes. Then, Jennifer Sikes, her former instructor, approached her about starting an on-campus food pantry. Kaitlin recognized this as her chance to work in the food ministries and took immediate action. After a year of research and working with Chi Alpha, a student ministries organization, the pantry opened this fall.

"I always thought of hunger in other countries, but never so close to home," says Kaitlin, the Chi Alpha president. "It's not something students discuss. It's deeply personal. We want to discreetly help. That's why there are no forms or

and hard work, MAC's Cardinals Food Pantry opened in September.

The response exceeded expectations. "After one month in operation, we've had an outpouring of support from employees and community members," praises Ellen. "Local churches have made donations, faculty members have organized fundraisers, and student groups have pitched in. More events are being organized."

Jennifer shares, "Food has been flying off the shelves. We received emails from family members of students stating the



**Student Kaitlin Courtway played a key roll in establishing MAC's food pantry.**

eligibility requirements. The pantry is open when the college is open. It's a 'take what you need' policy."

Kaitlin says, "The pantry is indeed a saving grace. Kids who hit a rough spot can get a meal. Without weekend campus meal service, dorm kids have few choices, especially without transportation. For students who live without help from their families, unexpected expenses create strain. Middle income families fall between the cracks when parents work and make just enough money to limit or disqualify them from financial aid. Families can afford tuition, but struggle with added expenses. Sometimes they choose between tuition payments and food. That's why the pantry is such a great blessing."

need for food in their households due to terminal illnesses, finances and other hard times. The touching stories make this journey worthwhile. Together, we can help fight hunger on our campus and make a positive impact in the lives of our students."

*For more information, contact Jennifer at [jsikes@MineralArea.edu](mailto:jsikes@MineralArea.edu) or Ellen at [emiller@MineralArea.edu](mailto:emiller@MineralArea.edu). Food donations can be dropped off at the Bookstore, Dean of Arts & Sciences Office and Learning Center.*



Army veteran Jákeem Forester has rediscovered his interest in drawing.

## Military Benefits Make Education Possible

“Our parents taught us to love the outdoors and care for nature, so being a park ranger will allow me to do the same for others. And, Missouri has many natural habitats to explore,” says Jákeem Forester, the middle of seven brothers, who grew up in Youngstown, OH.

After high school, Jákeem stepped into a tight job market. “My older brother talked to me about the military, and I ended up enlisting in ’08. I served nine years and am now a reservist,” says the freshman forestry major. “I joined my two brothers, some uncles and my great grandfather who answered the call to serve and protect.”

He started as a supply sergeant and later moved to weapons maintenance. “It was interesting to learn about the upkeep of weapons,” says Jákeem. “We

worked with small six-person Special Forces units to prepare for missions, like the one that worked with embassy security in Nigeria.”

Jákeem continues, “I was Airborne, too. When the number of supply personnel was reduced, I had to make a choice. I picked Airborne even though I’m scared to death of heights! But, parachuting seemed different than jumping from a building. We were a small unit, and I was the first to jump. ‘Time’ took a whole new meaning as the plane circled and gave us way too much time to think. When the door opened, my legs were really shaking... then, in a second, I felt this amazing adrenaline rush. Of course, safe landings have lots to do with how you feel about parachuting.”

The GI Bill and Reservist Tuition

“When the door opened, my legs were shaking... then, in a second, I felt this amazing adrenaline rush.”

Assistance program benefits help finance Jákeem’s education. “When my wife and I visited MAC, the small feel was appealing,” he says. “Instructors always offer personalized attention if you need it. I’ve learned a lot from Mr. Wilson, my art teacher. He’s my favorite because he’s relatable, hands-on, and re-kindled my interest in drawing. When I was younger, I drew all the time, especially cartoon characters. Although art may not be my career, I’m really enjoying the class.”

# Celebrating Alumnae Successes

Guests at the annual MAC Foundation Community Ladies Luncheon hear uplifting stories from current students and alumni about the impact MAC has had on their lives. This year, four nursing graduates were honored.

**Pam (Cox) Morris**, a 1978 LPN graduate originally from Bismarck, retired after 24 years as Bismarck School District's school nurse. She says, "Nursing was my calling, not merely my career. I hope my students have special memories of visiting 'Nurse Pam.' MAC's nursing program prepared us to be professionals. We depended on each other to keep motivated and spent endless hours studying. Before we could administer an injection on a real patient, we practiced on oranges." Pam and her husband, who live in Park Hills, recently opened Good Faith Sales on Highway 67 near Farmington.

**Nedra Harrington**, FNP-BSN, is a 1983 LPN and 1989 ADN graduate. Originally from Irondale, Nedra now lives and works in Farmington. She is

employed by Midwest Health Group as a family nurse practitioner. She says, "MAC gave me the ability to go back to school to get my GED, then further my education and become a healthcare professional. I truly love my job helping others. Patient care is important. I believe patients should be treated how we would treat our own families and always try to do what's in the patients' best interests."

**Heather Emert-Taliaferro** lives and works in Farmington. The 2003 ADN graduate recently completed her Master of Science in Nursing. For 10 years, Heather has worked at Parkland Health Center and currently is a medical surgical manager. She earned the 2015 Parkland Health Center Leader of the Year Award. "Memories are many... the times we studied, laughed and cried together...sitting at a study table and learning airplanes crashed into the World Trade Center," she recalls. "Also, to calm our anxiety before exams, Mrs. Jinkerson had us recite the *Saturday Night Live* saying 'I'm good enough, smart enough, and darn it, people like

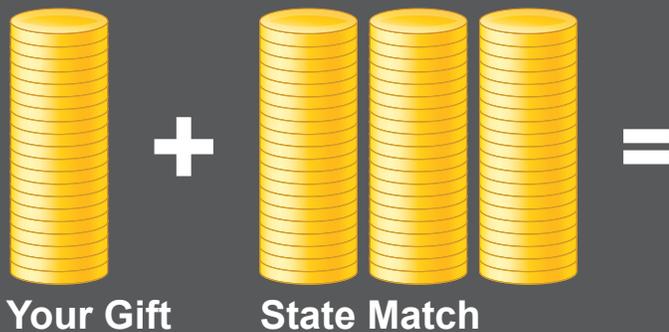
me.' Often when I give presentations, I think of her and this saying and can't help but smile."

**Amy House Keller**, of Bonne Terre, earned her ADN in 1997 and her BSN in 2009. She recalls, "All my instructors, like Mrs. Kohn, Mrs. Nicholson and Jessie Williams, made a difference in my life and career. They led by example, prepared us to be nurses, and spoke of the trials and tough times we would endure." Amy is owner and president/CEO of A1 Home Care and Adult Day Care Center. She is the 2015 Bonne Terre Chamber Business Leader of the Year recipient. "Every single day, I try to help others and give back to the community. Why? It brings me joy. I believe we are on this earth to make a difference and help others. Regardless of your medical condition, race or ability to pay, we are in people's homes to make a difference, to help where needed, and to leave a long-lasting impact. I don't want the largest home care in this area, but I do want the best."

Congratulations, Amy, Heather, Nedra and Pam.

MAC Foundation honored alumnae Pam (Cox) Morris, Heather Emert-Taliaferro and Amy House Keller and (not pictured) Nedra Harrington.





The matching gift component is a remarkable way to increase the purchasing ability of your gift.

# Enhancement Grant Campaign

Mineral Area College strives to remain current on educational curriculum, technology and industry standards so students have the best opportunities to earn degrees and compete in the labor market.

Again this year, the Department of Elementary & Secondary Education offers the Enhancement Grant which provides a \$3-for-\$1 match to encourage support for career education. MAC Foundation invites the community to keep MAC on the leading edge of preparing students for the workforce by contributing to the Enhancement Grant Matching Fund Campaign.

Director of Development Kevin Thurman says gifts make a huge impact in buying power. In fact, donors to past campaigns have provided key equipment and training components for various programs including allied health and law enforcement.

“At a time when budgets are squeezed, the Enhancement Grant is not only an invaluable tool to multiply the value of a donor’s gift, it also leverages state tax dollars back to MAC as a large portion of funding for state-of-the-art technology purchases,” explains Kevin. “With the \$3-for-\$1 match, every donation has a much more profound impact. A \$20 gift is worth up to \$80 in purchasing power. This year anyone who donates to the campaign is automatically entered in a drawing for a \$500 cash gift card.”

The community can provide support in the form of monetary donations to bring Enhancement Grant funds to MAC. This effort is an extension of the former Simmons Match Campaign, which for many years was headed by the late Dr. Gayle Simmons and his late wife, Rowena. The two 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.

MAC President Dr. Steve Kurtz says it’s a proud tradition to carry on. “It is certainly an honor to continue the legacy established by Dr. Simmons and Rowena,” he says. “They were not only educators, they were visionaries. They understood how education and skilled training would continue to increase in value. We hope the community will continue to support their vision.”

*The Enhancement Grant Campaign runs through December 31, 2017. Give today using the enclosed envelope, by calling (573) 518-2114 or visiting [www.MineralArea.edu/Foundation](http://www.MineralArea.edu/Foundation).*

# Healthcare is the Big Winner!

The region's pool of qualified healthcare professionals looks brighter thanks to the generosity of Mineral Area Osteopathic Foundation (MAOF), a 501(c)(3) nonprofit that promotes and improves the health of the people in its service area encompassing St. Francois, Washington, Iron, Madison and Ste. Genevieve counties and the city of Joplin.

MAOF views the Allied Health Department as a key player in providing the region with qualified healthcare professionals. From 2009 to date, MAOF has invested \$325,768 in scholarships to support students in the nursing, paramedic, radiology and Fast-Track programs.

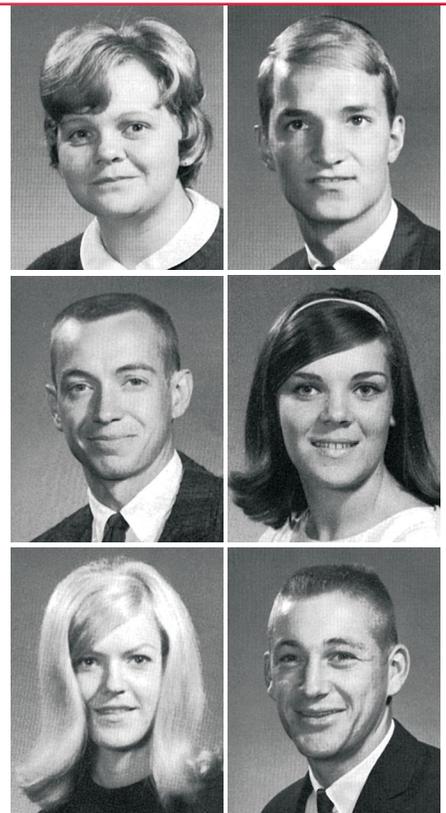
"MAOF feels investments in MAC's allied health programs help students who are going to work in our area, and thus improve the healthcare

environment for our families and friends," explains Dr. Victoria Damba, a MAOF board member and MAC nursing program alum. "The goal is to ultimately improve access to care for the service area once provided by Mineral Area Osteopathic Hospital. We provide monies to help students who may not otherwise be able to afford college as well as students who will stay in the area to help with the medical needs of our area."

"The Board felt the original physicians who initially started the hospital in the 1950s would want to continue to try to improve healthcare in the Farmington area, as they did when they opened the hospital. We try to focus our financial support on individuals who will continue to provide care in our local area as well as surrounding areas of Southeast Missouri."

**Mineral Area Osteopathic Foundation is a great supporter of MAC's Allied Health programs.**

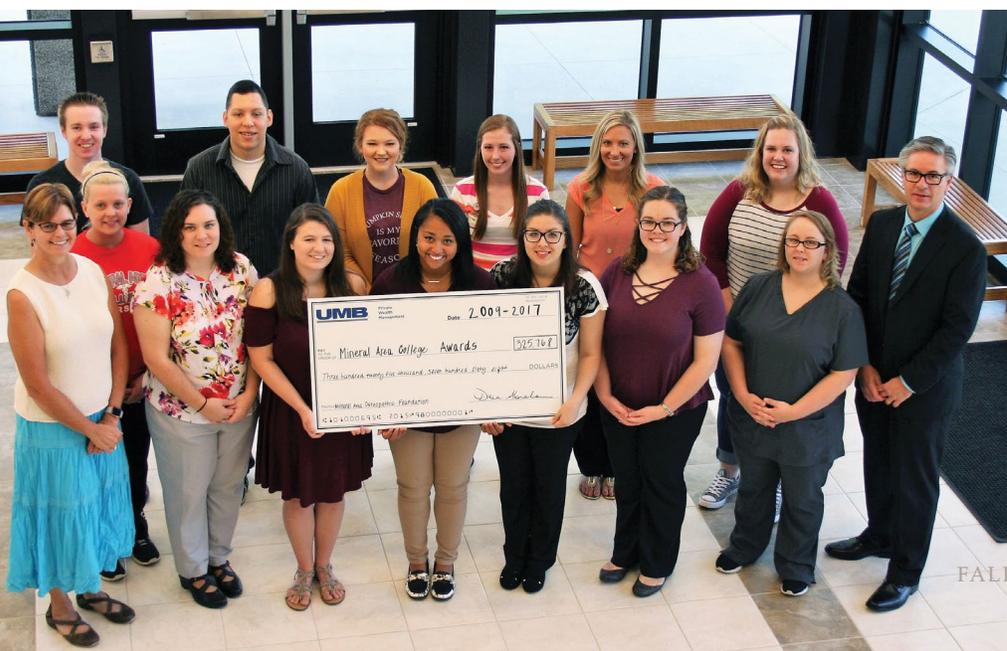
Pictured with current recipients are MAOF board member and MAC alum Victoria Damba, D.O. (far left) and MAC Dean of Career & Technical Education Roger McMillian (far right). The recipients are: (front row) Kassandra Henson (Ironton), Faith Radosevich (Park Hills), Kaleigh Warren (Fredericktown), McKinsey Amonette (Farmington), Catrina Yancey (Fredericktown), Michaela P. Williams (Irondale), Megan Carnell (Park Hills), (back row) Zach Dane (Bonne Terre), Matthew Wayne (Fredericktown), Alexandria Gibson (Fredericktown), Taylor Reed (Bismarck), Tiffany Thompson (Park Hills) and Emilee Kay (Fredericktown). Not pictured: Amy Grebe (Bismarck) and Madison Berkbigler (Perryville).



## Flashback

### 1967 Sophomores

The class included Bonnie Cash, Charles Carleton, Larry Abney, Brenda Bay, Rose Mary Angle, Roger Charboneau and Nancy Cozean.



THANK YOU



Donor support helps reduce financial obstacles and opens educational opportunities for hundreds of students each year.

# 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.

Akers, Lindell  
Angline, Randall and Kay  
Anonymous  
Arcadia Valley Alumni Association  
Archer, Gene and Maxine  
Arnett, David and Emily  
Arnold, Edna  
Athletico Management, LLC  
Atwell, Theresa  
Ballet Arts Center  
Basler, Neil and Danielle  
Batterton, Linda  
Bauman, Francis and Fawn  
Beard, Stephen and Sheila  
Beckman, John and Vicki  
Berry, William and Jacqueline  
Bischoff, Kathleen  
Boots, Henry and Denise  
Boyer, Naomi  
Browers, Diane  
Buckman Laboratories, Inc  
Buffalo Wild Wings Grill & Bar  
Bullis, James and Nancy

Bullock, Daniel and Virginia  
Burch, Stephen and Rebecca  
Burns, Dean and Chris  
Byrd, Robert and Carole  
Caleca, Anthony and Michelle  
Camelot Nursing Center  
Carleton, Charles and Bettie  
Carroll, Bob  
Centene Management Company, LLC  
City of Potosi  
Clevenger, Mary  
Coach Bill Bradley Memorial Scholarship  
Fund  
Cole, Maxine  
Cutright, Mark  
Davidson, Charlena  
Dealy, Dave and Lucy  
Deneke, C.  
Deneke, William and Sue  
Dennis, Robyn  
Denton, Ruth  
Devoto, Terrie  
Dickerson, Dianne

Doser, Don  
Dundon, Josephine  
Dundon, Kim  
Eastern Region Training Center  
Echols, Doyle and Sallie  
Eck, Deborah  
Edwards, Larry  
Faircloth, Harvey and Mary Lee  
Farmington Elks Lodge #1765  
Farmington Masonic Lodge  
Flotron, Richard and Susan  
Friend, Richard and Shannon  
Gegg, Leslie  
Gerig, John  
Giessing, Elaine  
Gladbach, Cindy  
Goforth, Dean and Catherine  
Gold, Dana  
Golden, Paula  
Good Earth Tools  
Grider, Steven and Lisa  
Grundmann, Bill and Selzer-Grundmann,  
Jane  
Hahn, Brian and Judy  
Hahn, Robert  
Hall, Scott  
Hampton, James  
Harder, Larry  
Hickman, Loel and Donna  
Hogan, Elaine and Michael

Hogancamp, Carol  
 Huffman Roofing  
 Ivison, Saundra  
 Jansen, Craig  
 Jayne, Christopher  
 Jeffco Deputy Welfare Fund  
 Jefferson Foundation  
 Johnson, John and Ortega, Andrew  
 Joyce, James  
 Karl, Donald and Ellen  
 Kelly, Daniel and Betty  
 Ketchum, Grace  
 Kile, Tom and Tina  
 King, James  
 Krodinger, Larry  
 Kurtz, Steven and Reneé  
 Landrum, Mit and Christine  
 Laut, Deborah  
 Little Caesars Danco Pizza, Inc.  
 Lyon, Jim and Anita  
 Magner, Nace and Mary  
 Mallory Hicks Memorial Scholarship Fund  
 Mallory, Mary  
 Matz, Amy  
 McCreary, Jeffrey and Dana  
 McGee, Michael and Susan  
 Meinershagen, Shawn and Jamie  
 Mell, Paul and Elizabeth  
 Merrill, Larry  
 Merrill-Doss, Jean and Doss, Bob  
 Messe, Albert and Sharon  
 Miller, John and Mary  
 Mineral Area Council On The Arts  
 Missouri Baptist University  
 Mitchell, Thelma  
 Morris, Gary and Christina  
 Newman, Gene and Mary  
 Nickelson, Georgia  
 Norman L. Rigdon Post 5896  
 Orr, Stephen and Mendy  
 Payne, Jim and Doris  
 Peller, Jack  
 Perry, Denise  
 Pierce, Roberta  
 Pipkin, Chad  
 Politte, Lenard and Mary Lu  
 Portell, Arthur and Jo Ann  
 Poston, Jack and Elizabeth  
 Powell, Kathleen  
 Pratte, Barron and Joann  
 Randall, Anette  
 Rauls, Gary and Joan  
 Resinger, Rodney  
 Rippee, Mary  
 Ropelle, Peggy  
 Roubidoux, Steve and Laurie  
 Royer, Dick and Ann  
 Ruess, Doug and Nicki  
 Save-A-Lot

Sanders, Twila  
 Schnable, Fred and Diane  
 Schnucks  
 Schwab, Dolores  
 Scobee, Bob and Margaret  
 SEMO LASE  
 Shaner, Beulah  
 Shoemaker, Keven and Janet  
 Silvey, Mike and Nancy  
 Skaggs, Missy  
 Skaggs, Randy and Kimberly  
 Smith, Richard and Freda  
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 St. Gemme, Dale and Betty  
 Stokes, Dan  
 Stotler, William and Barbara  
 Sumpter, Michael and Lisa  
 Taylor, Anthony and Virginia  
 The Doe Run Company  
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 Thompson, Peter and Karen  
 Thurman, Kevin and Karri  
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 Tittman, Betty  
 Tseng, George  
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 Valentine, Marjorie  
 Valle Catholic High School  
 VSA, Inc.  
 Wade, Patty  
 Wade, William  
 Walker, Travis and Carolyn  
 Walton, Terry and Candy  
 Watkins, Jim and Amy  
 Weber Insurance  
 Weible, Ed and Mary Lee  
 Welshon, Roy and Marcella  
 White, Gary and Donna  
 Wilson, Thomas and Suzanne  
 Wisdom, Denver and Betty  
 Wright, Dale and Denise  
 Zacuto

### In Honor

Lisa St. Gemme Borden

### In Memory

Donella Batterton Ray  
 Doris Bradley  
 Ralph Dickenson  
 Dorothy Ann Gerig  
 Robert "Bob" Joe Nash  
 Larry Shaner  
 Gayle and Rowena Simmons  
 T.J. Stewart Jr.  
 T.J. Stewart Sr.

Donor gifts received between May 1 and September 30, 2017



## Ways to Give Support Education

- Stocks or Securities**  
Explore the tax advantages of donating stocks and securities. The benefits may be surprising.
- Champion a Favorite Department**  
Donate to help with lab supplies, equipment purchases or professional development needs.
- In Honor or Memory**  
Recognize a special person, family member, teacher or friend. Honorees or family members will be notified of your thoughtfulness.
- Matching Gifts**  
Does your employer offer a matching program?
- Planned Giving**  
Include MAC Foundation in your estate plans to help future students.
- Online Giving**  
For flexibility and convenience, use your debit or credit card to make a one-time gift or automatic donations at [www.MineralArea.edu/Foundation](http://www.MineralArea.edu/Foundation).
- Tax Savings**  
Consult your estate planner and financial or tax advisor to determine tax considerations for gifts. MAC Foundation, is a 501(C)(3) charitable entity.

*Give today using the enclosed envelope, by calling (573) 518-2114 or visiting [www.MineralArea.edu/Foundation](http://www.MineralArea.edu/Foundation).*

## Fine Arts Events

### Musical: *Bat Boy*

7 pm, Nov. 29-Dec. 2, MAC Theater

### Guitar Ensemble Concert

2 pm, Dec. 3, Theater - FREE

### Winter Choral Concert: *Messiah*

7:30 pm, Dec. 8  
 First Baptist Church, Farmington

### Auditions: *All My Sons (Musical)*

2 pm, Dec. 10, MAC Theater

### Concert Band & Steel Drum Ensemble

7:30 pm, Dec. 12, MAC Theater - FREE

### Holiday Big Band Dinner & Dance

6-9 pm, Dec. 13  
 Alexander's at The Factory, Farmington





Elaina Chazelle and Emilie Gray are glad they took advantage of classes while in high school.

## Friends Since Middle School

Alumni and friends donating to the Buck-A-Month Club sponsored four scholarship students this year. It's so amazing what the collective efforts of many people donating a few dollars per month can do.

Emilie Gray and Elaina Chazelle are self-described "inseparables." In unison, they giggle, "We do everything together. We became friends in middle school and are now at MAC." Although it's their first semester on campus, they're considered sophomores since they earned enough college credits in high school.

Emilie says, "Financial help is tremendous and makes college affordable. The A+, dual credit and dual enrollment options are just amazing. One MAC program even offers discounted tuition...why wouldn't you come here?"

Plus, I am so grateful for the Buck-A-Month scholarship to help with books."

The co-eds share other reasons why MAC's a smart choice for high school grads. "We have more freedom and flexibility which is a nice transition to a bigger school. The teachers are super helpful. That's what I need," says Elaina. "MAC feels comfortable," says Emilie. "Here it's not as intimidating to talk in front of class or ask questions as it probably is in a big university. And, it's fun to make new friends and see our Potosi High classmates who are here. MAC's super-fun, and sharing this experience with my very best friend is truly amazing."

They share most, but not all, interests. Elaina says, "We're very spontaneous. Two of our favorite things are ice cream

and Netflix. But, we differ on movies. I'm a child at heart and like the Disney princess movies. Emilie's favorites are Jane Austen adaptations."

Good grades are a priority. Emilie strives to continue her straight As. "I'm certainly not lazy, because I make good grades. But, Emilie is super-intense on her grades," Elaina, a marketing major, says. "My biggest worry is moving to a big city and being a nervous wreck about driving in city traffic!"

*If you wish to contribute to a student scholarship, become a Buck-A-Month member by using the enclosed envelope to send your gift. Note "BAM" on your check. You can also give by calling (573) 518-2114 or visit [www.MineralArea.edu/Foundation](http://www.MineralArea.edu/Foundation).*

# We Returned Home

After his Leadwood High graduation, Jim Green selected FRJC's basketball scholarship over other offers. He and Charlie Bequette were the starting guards for the 1956-57 season. "Then, I went with friends to McDonnell-Douglas to check out jobs being advertised," says Jim. "To my surprise, I was offered a job. Money talked, and I took a position as a mechanical electrician working on circuits for jet aircraft."

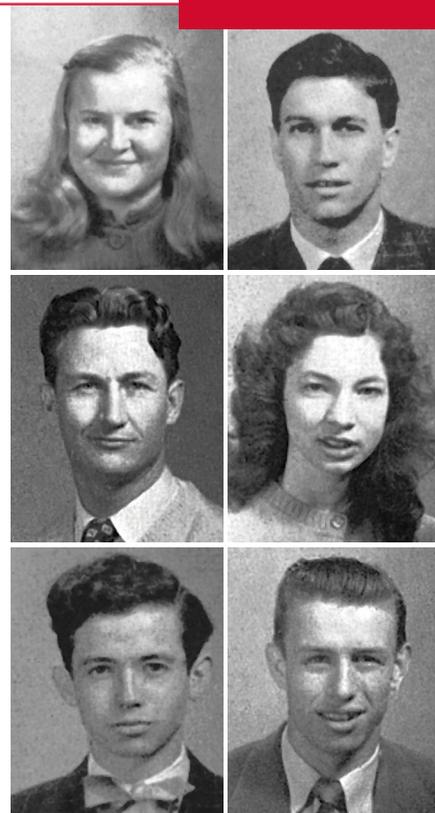
In 1958, the job market tightened, so Jim and a friend opted for the military. "We entered the Air Force on the buddy system," he explains. "After basic training, we got our orders. He went to Alaska, and I went to Japan. The United States had expanded its presence in Japan, so I spent two years overseas working as a Morse radio interceptor operator. After two years, I was assigned to Scott Air Force Base, near St. Louis, where General Dany was in command, until my discharge in 1962."

**Jim Green enjoys grilling a good hamburger or steak.**



Scott AFB is where Jim met Diana, his wife. They have two sons, seven grandchildren and two great-grandchildren. "When I left the military, I considered returning to college, but I just couldn't manage it financially with family responsibilities," he says. "So, I took a position in Afton. But, I knew I didn't want to raise my family in the city, and here I could also hunt and fish. We returned 'home,' and I worked locally at Pea Ridge and finished my career in 1998 at Flat River Glass." Jim and Diana live in Desloge.

In retirement, Jim golfs three times per week and enjoys a good skins game with friends. The Greens enjoy travel, especially destinations with beautiful beaches like the Caribbean and Hawaii. Jim says, "I'll admit I didn't have high expectations for our Alaska trip. I was wrong. The scenery and glaciers were unbelievable. We saw all kinds of wildlife — grizzlies, eagles, sheep. So, we're thinking about a return trip."



## Flashback

### 1947 Sophomores

The class included Barbara Jo Bess, Benton A. Hurst, Ed Lewis, Mary Lou Ledbetter, Norman Parker, Leo Bieser and Pauline LaPlante.

# Focused on Quality Patient Care

“My work in small hospitals laid the foundation for the professional nurse I am today.”

“Growing up with a mother who was a registered nurse, it seems like nursing was always in my blood,” says Martha (Boyer) K. Syms, RN, BSN. “And, since MAC was seven miles from my Farmington home, our choice for education was simple: I was going to MAC in Flat River!”

The 1974 MAC grad says, “My career began in a small county hospital and progressed into 40+ years in healthcare. In 1976, I moved to Woodward, OK, to pursue romance, got married and continued working in an acute care hospital setting. My work in small hospitals laid the foundation for the professional nurse I am today. My career—whether in public health, behavioral health or as a practical nursing instructor—always led back to acute care. Then, in 2000, I had the honor to be in the University of Oklahoma’s first distance learning program where I achieved my BSN.”

In 1990, her introduction to regulatory compliance and quality management came when she was hired as the director of quality and regulatory compliance for an acute care hospital that just completed its Joint Commission performance survey and needed guidance to correct deficiencies. Currently, she is St. Mary’s Regional Medical Center’s Director of Patient Safety. Her interest in learning



Director of Patient Safety Martha Syms works at St. Mary’s Regional Medical Center in Enid, OK.

and expanding her healthcare quality and leadership expertise is evidenced by workplace accomplishments. Since Martha joined the leadership team, St. Mary’s has been recognized by its parent company as the Top Quality Performer four of the seven years the honor has been awarded.

“One professional achievement of which I am most proud is when I was selected to present a story board of success at the American Hospital Association Leadership Convention in San Diego,” she explains. “I represented the Oklahoma Hospital Association due to my hospital’s participation in the Partnership for Patient Safety Initiative.”

Martha says, “Family is important. In 1979, I gave birth to my daughter Jayme Hale, who years later made me a Grammie. In 1998, I married Walter Syms and became stepmother to three

wonderful adult children, who added seven more grandchildren. In my leisure time, Walter and I participate in couples’ golf tournaments, and, we have actually won a couple! I consider myself very blessed with family, friends and great healthcare employment since my early days at MAC.”

She reflects on the nursing program, “We grew very close because we had most classes together. Most recent high school graduates considered it a disadvantage to be in school with more mature students. We wanted the traditional ‘college student experience’ of running for student council and attending sports events. Instead, we had dual pressures. First, the rigors of the nursing program. Then, the competition from our mature peers who were home studying and, in some cases, caring for children and families.”

# You Don't Need a Reason

“Service to others” is a cornerstone of Rob Baker’s professional and personal life. Whether in his workplace or teaching martial arts, Rob maintains you don’t need a reason to help others.

For 20 years, Rob has worked at East Missouri Action Agency and currently serves as a project manager. “My career in community service is very satisfying. I assist the homeless, ex-offenders, low-income families and other struggling populations who find

themselves in poverty situations. The public’s misconceptions of poverty can be a major obstacle, so educating the public is an important part of my job,” he explains. “My rewards come when I see relief on someone’s face when a crisis is fixed or as families achieve some success in their lives. I love being a voice for those who are often unheard. I try to volunteer as much as possible and give back to this great community.”

Thirty years ago, Rob opened Baker’s

Martial Arts Academy where students—ages 5 to 70—learn martial arts, focus, respect, confidence, mental strength and positive attitude. The Desloge native says, “The Green Hornet and Billy Jack captured my interest in martial arts when I was a kid. In my sophomore year, I connected with Larry Whitener and Dave Nichols who taught and trained me in the sport. During my competitive days, I was ranked third in a nine-state region in forms, sparring and weapons. Once they decided to no longer teach, I started my own school, more out of necessity for my own training competition. My first class had four students. Now, it averages about 50 or 60 memberships.”

The 1983-85 alum explains, “I’ve been blessed with the opportunity to train with some of the best instructors in the world including Grand Master Jhoon Rhee and Dan Inosanto and Larry Hartsell, two of Bruce Lee’s students. I’ve studied in Indonesia and Brazil, and now I get to share that knowledge.”

The longevity of Baker’s Academy rests on its uncompromised dedication to the sport’s legacy and fundamentals. Rob says it’s important that students learn the history and family tree to understand the origin of the sport. Photos of the unbroken lineage—including Rob with his instructors and their instructors leading back to Grandmaster Jhoon Rhee—are displayed at the academy.

In 2010, Rob was recognized as the Daily Journal Citizen of the Year for his longtime community service. He currently serves as the St. Francois County Community Partnership board chair and on the Park Hills-Leadington Chamber Board of Directors.

After MAC, he transferred to SEMO to advance his criminal justice training.

*Former classmates and those interested in learning more about the academy may contact Rob at [bka\\_1@yahoo.com](mailto:bka_1@yahoo.com).*

**Rob Baker believes young people build character and life skills through martial arts.**





Amidst the lights and media, MMA fighter Teejay Britton says his number one focus is God.

## Had More in Mind for Me

“We didn’t have a lot growing up,” explains Teejay Britton. “Life wasn’t easy. I remember days we didn’t have a meal or we didn’t have electricity. Money wasn’t our family’s only struggle. In school, I had discipline issues. My neighborhood knew me as the kid who liked to fight and be in trouble. Once a teacher told me I would probably be dead or in jail by the time I was 17. But, things changed after my father beat his alcohol problems. By his example, we learned to value hard work, excel at all we did, and treasure our tight-knit family. He’d say, ‘If you have family and you’re tough, you’ll make it.’”

Teejay’s athleticism paved a brighter future. Although he excelled at track at Florissant Valley Community College,

he didn’t enjoy running and returned home. His family prodded him to get his education, so the Poplar Bluff native chose MAC to play basketball—earning all-conference, all-region and all-American recognition, and completing his bachelor’s degree. At Missouri Southern, he finished his degree and earned MIAA Defensive Player of the Year and all-conference honors. He then played professionally overseas.

To maintain his fitness routine after basketball, Teejay tried boxing which unlocked his new career in mixed martial arts (MMA). Sporting the moniker Bad Newz, he uses martial arts as a dual platform: fitness and spreading God’s word. Teejay says, “I was living the fast life and struggling. Then, I gave my life to Christ. I never thought

“I hope my message—a light in this sometimes dark world—inspires young people...”

I’d be married, much less preaching or speaking to young people. But, God had more in mind for me.”

Teejay says, “Often my audiences are troubled youth. I tell my personal struggles and say, ‘Listen, I know where you’re coming from. I pretty much grew up with nothing. I’m the kid whose parents couldn’t always afford food, electricity and heat. My shoes had holes. I almost was expelled. I never really fit in. Now, see what hard work and God did for me?’” He says school wasn’t always enjoyable. But, once he realized education was the key to things he wanted, he devoted his resources to earning his degrees.



**DeAlan Hicks (left) and Teejay Britton (right) are MMA fighters and former MAC teammates.**

MMA fighting and religion—an unconventional combination? “It works. The competition is addictive, and I get to share Christ with the fans and other fighters,” says the 2006 MAC graduate. “It’s emotional, too, because I have knelt and prayed in the ring with other fighters.”

As a youth evangelist, MMA fighter, father, basketball coach and mentor, Teejay says, “I hope my message—there is light in this sometimes dark world—inspires young people to avoid mistakes I made and to become better people through hard work, education and opening their hearts to God.”

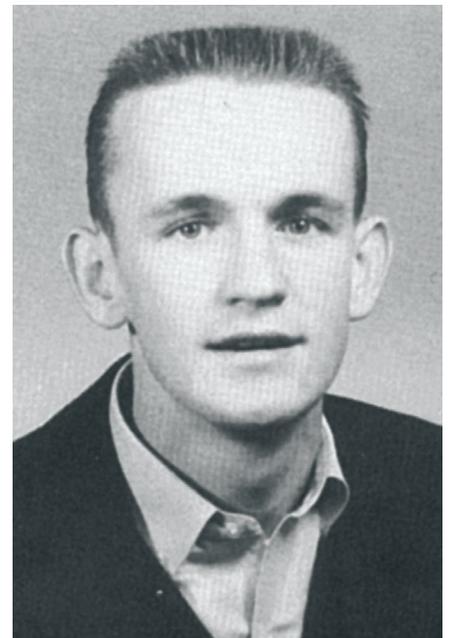
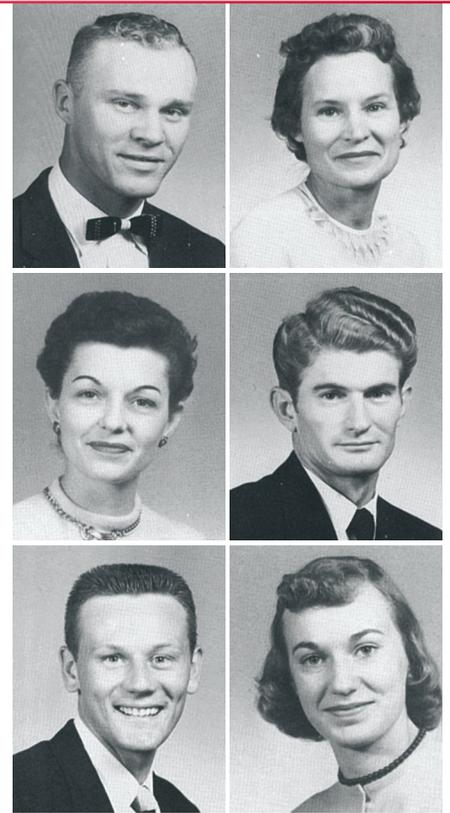
Today, Teejay understands how a single person or conversation can inspire change. “I remember the very day Coach Gray sat me down in his

office. He knew I needed direction. He told me I had charisma...that I was born to be different...that I had choices to make...how I could impact the lives of troubled kids...and how I should consider getting into the ministry. It didn’t make much sense then, but I have never forgotten that day. His message resonated with my father’s advice when he always told us kids to ‘be rare.’ It took me a while, but I finally understood what I was to do.”

Teejay and his wife have five children and live in Joplin. Teejay’s audiences range from a dozen to 800 at sports clubs, schools and colleges.

*To learn more about Teejay’s MMA, ministry and speaking opportunities, visit him at “officialteejaybritton” on Facebook.*

**Faith and family are priorities for Teejay and his wife who have five children.**



## Flashback

### 1957 Sophomores

The class included Edward Guggenberger, Iva Ball, Jennie Crabtree, James Bell, Richard Allan Rosser, Shirley Lenz and Dixie Kohn.

# Motivated to Volunteer

“...be generous of your time, honor your commitments, always be truthful, enjoy where you are today, and never be afraid to make a mistake or to laugh at yourself.”

Christine and her parents were miles apart on college choices. “I attended MAC, but not necessarily willingly,” explains Christine (Miller) Robbins, MAC 1984-85. “I was ready to move on, but my parents were adamant I would go to MAC for the basic courses. Now, I appreciate their firmness and realize my intended path was so completely wrong for me. MAC provided good times and a safe environment where I could discover, explore, question and rebel.” In 1988, she completed her Bachelor of Arts-Communications, with emphasis in public relations, from Southern Methodist University.

“I’m passionate about a lot of things especially family, children and animals,” she says. “I really try to live the way I was raised: think of others, help others, don’t judge harshly because what you see may not necessarily be the full story, be generous of your time, honor your commitments, always be truthful, enjoy where you are today, and never be afraid to make a mistake or to laugh at yourself.”

For 14 years, she worked for Electronic Data Systems. Its Dallas headquarters was her first assignment and several relocations followed. Each relocation paved an opportunity to work in different areas, such as technical writing, corporate training, customer communication strategies, internal communications group



**Christine Robbins and her mother Sandra Miller, retired MAC business instructor.**

interfaces, and work with the Board of Directors and Office of Chairman. When she and her husband, Bill, moved to San José, she worked for NetScreen.

Making people’s lives better is what motivates Christine to volunteer. “Once my daughter was born, I ‘retired’ from working outside the home and found lots of volunteer opportunities,” explains the mother of an almost-teenager. “High on my list are my daughter’s school and sports teams as well as neighborhood, church and community events. As a Parents’ Association ambassador, I personally greet all new school families and work with them to make a successful transition.”

While other commitments take time from her work with the Junior League of San José, Christine remains committed to its efforts to transform communities and develop the potential of women. Christine says, “Our Volunteer Recognition Luncheon

showcases awesome successes. I am humbled and amazed how selflessly people give of themselves. I had the privilege of writing several of the event’s video scripts. It’s so invigorating and motivational. What these folks do reminds me that one person definitely can, and does, make a difference.”

Of MAC memories, Christine says, “My list is endless! Since mom was a MAC instructor, being on campus felt like an extension of home. Coach Loughary didn’t think twice to needle me about bowling as my PE credit. Coach Sechrest reminded me to pay attention to my mother because she’s a good lady, and I’m still trying, but she’s a hard act to follow. Ms. Flanagan was definitely a favorite teacher. Though I was never a huge literature fan, she made the subject relatable and made us all feel like English Lit experts. There are so many... Jenny Gunn, Bob Civey, Bob Scobee, Ralph Dickenson, Jini Rosenstengel.”

# Lots of Interesting Experiences

A basketball scholarship brought Larry Tucker to Flat River Junior College in 1959-61. While he earned an associate degree, he enjoyed playing basketball for Coach Louis Myers and is proud to have been part of the team that was nationally ranked 5th among junior colleges.

"I had good teammates like Harvey Faircloth, Doug Berry and Ron Scott, and we made some good memories," he says. "I remember playing Moberly and getting pounded by 40 points...their dominant player was drafted by the Boston Celtics. We squeezed six per car on road trips. When Coach Myers fired up his Chrysler, he always kept us on

the edge of our seats with his fearless driving. Ron Scott would tell me it was my job to keep us safe when Coach was behind the wheel!"

In 1963, Larry earned his teaching certificate at Southeast Missouri State. He shortened his teaching career and graduate work to seize a new opportunity. He was recruited by the federal government as an investigator to administer background checks for people seeking security clearance.

In 1966 and 1967, amid civil rights unrest, Larry was working with voter registration programs in Alabama, Georgia, Louisiana, South Carolina and Mississippi. "Our job was to help black

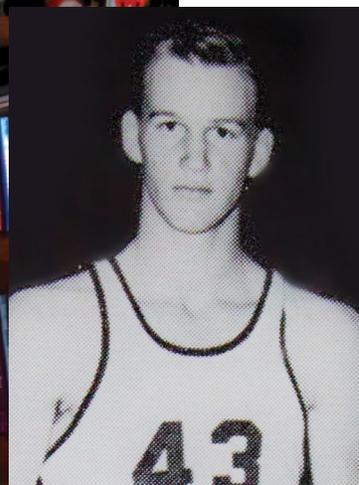
voters get registered for the upcoming elections," he explains. "I don't think we realized the magnitude of what was unfolding. Lots of whites didn't want us in the south. It was threatening a few times when some car tires were slashed, and a vehicle was shot up once."

Larry tells of another interesting experience, "I preached at an all-black Baptist church in the south for six months. It was so rewarding. The music was inspirational and the congregation was definitely spirit-filled."

After his 2001 retirement, Larry and his wife, Sue, hit the road. They have visited all 50 states and traveled internationally to Denmark, Germany, Austria, Switzerland, Dominican Republic, Bahamas, Brazil, Mexico, Panama, Puerto Rico, Ecuador, China, Japan, France, Belgium and Jamaica. Some memorable moments include standing on The Great Wall for Larry's sixty-sixth birthday and visiting locations in Austria where President Kennedy and Russian President Khrushchev discussed the Cold War.

In 2008, Larry suffered a major stroke, but it did not stop their travel or other activities. He moved from his Des Arc home place to Desloge for closer access to his doctors. He has written a book which was typed entirely with his left hand as he lost use of his right from the stroke. *The Unorthodox*, is available on Amazon.

Larry Tucker reads approximately six to eight books per week.



"When Coach Myers fired up his Chrysler, he always kept us on the edge of our seats..."



Corey Warner finds a sense of accomplishment when his art inspires a unique perspective for his viewers.

## Mother Nature Always Puts on a Show

Corey Warner's photography interests are rooted in the early days of digital photography, back when chemical methods were replaced by JPEGs and megapixels. "I see the world through the lens of a camera, even if I don't have one on me," he says. "The challenge is to seek beauty everywhere. The reward is turning the image I have composed in my mind into an observable object that, hopefully, inspires people to observe the beauty around them."

The 1996-98 alum says, "You can't really go wrong as Mother Nature always puts on a show. Wide landscapes excite me as much as finding fleeting little things on the forest floor. I am also very attracted to dilapidated structures like an old house that's overgrown or a rusted out car.

Catching a scene in the right light will write a story, and that story is never the same for anyone. It is a photograph's ability to weave a tale that can shape-shift and bend to the will of a person's perspective that really gets me excited."

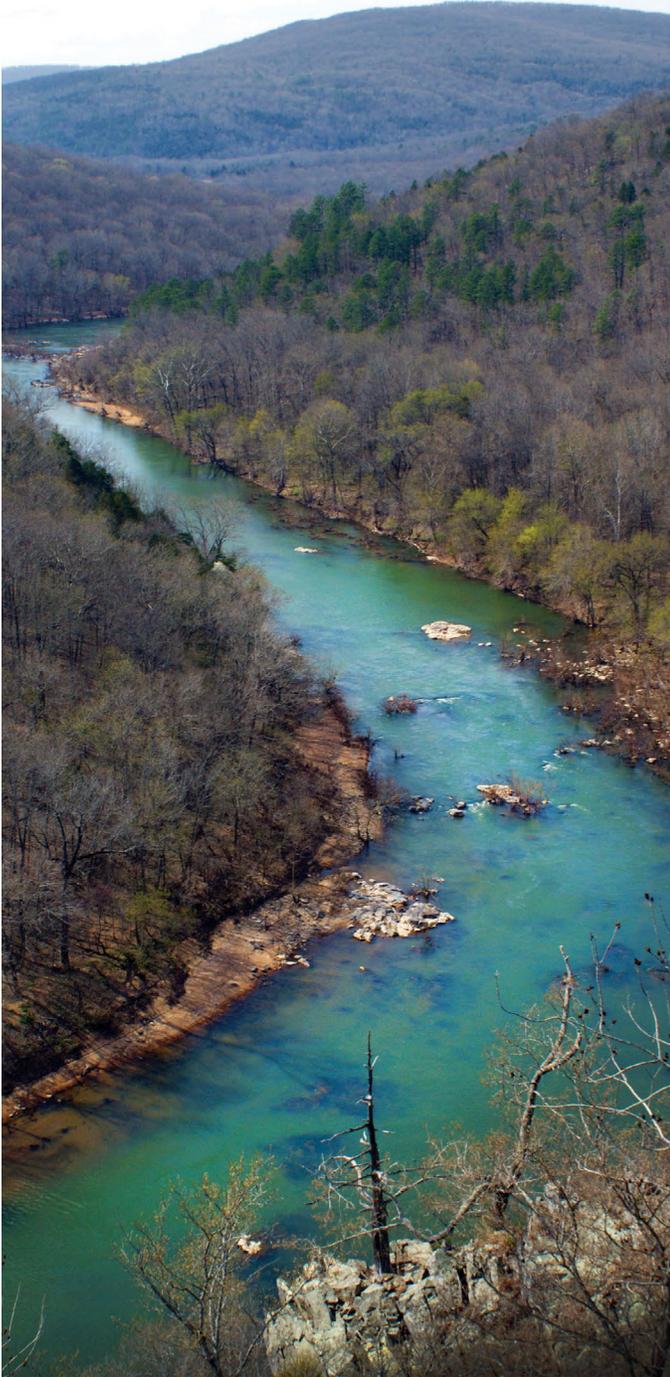
Corey adds, "My challenge is to produce a photo that represents my perception of the subject. Rarely will the camera capture the scene how my eye and brain perceive it, so post-work is important to my art. I'm not a photography purist, so editing software is a necessary evil." He clarifies, "When I say editing, I don't mean adding things that aren't there...only punching up the color or adjusting the light to draw the viewer's eye to where I want it to be."

His photos are printed on a variety of substrates. "My recent show, *11:24*, was all digitally printed on canvas and

personally stretched onto frames with help from a good friend and fellow MAC alum John Debold." Though he's been out of commercial photography for a while, several requests have Corey considering a re-entry to the business.

Corey earned MAC's Artist of the Year honors for his artwork. In 1998, he transferred to the Watkins College of Art, Design and Film in Nashville, TN. He says, "My wife and I met in the art program, dated for a bit, then went our separate ways. We found each other online a few years later and have been together since. She means everything to me, so obviously MAC has had a huge effect on my personal life, too."

Corey can be contacted via email at [studio\\_222@yahoo.com](mailto:studio_222@yahoo.com) or at "olcore" on Instagram.



**Corey describes three of his favorite works.**

▲ **From Lee's Bluff:** *This is a location down on the St. Francis River in rural Madison County. It's not a very well-known spot, but people in the area who are smitten with our region's beauty have probably heard of it or been there. The bluff is not an easy location to reach as it's quite a hike up the side of a mountain, but totally worth it. To me, it is essential Southeast Missouri. I've been at all times of the year, and it's always a different and wholly rewarding experience.*

▶ **The Watcher:** *I just happened to be driving around the back roads of Madison County and caught an old barn cat checking out the scene. I think it's a great composition and the cat has a very expressive face. It was one of those 'right place at the right time' photographs that I really enjoy.*



▲ **Stand By Me Bridge:** *This was a photo that I had planned in my head and actually came out looking better than I had imagined. I caught a day with a great sky, and it really works. Also, some friends and I used to drive out to that old trestle and walk across. Thinking back now, it probably wasn't the safest or most responsible thing we ever did...but, I have some fun memories of the place. I like photos that are flavored with nostalgia.*





Trustees Dr. Don VanHerck and Jerry Sullivan celebrate the naming of the board room.

## Honoring & Remembering

Community service is one way to give back to MAC. This summer the Board of Trustees honored its longest-serving trustee, **Dr. Don VanHerck**, for his service to the college with the distinction of naming the college's board room after him. The room, adjacent to the President's Office, is now the VanHerck Board Room. Dr. VanHerck, a Bismarck native and FRJC alumnus, was elected to the board in 1974 representing Subdistrict 5.

To the position, he brought strength in leadership, knowledge of the area and extensive experience in education, specifically the vocational and technical education arena, having served 20+ years as UniTec Career Center's director. During his four decades of board service, he helped chart the college's vision and accomplishments. Because he understood human capital is an essential component to success, he valued the welfare of MAC employees.

Respect, longevity and commitment to the prosperity of MAC and the region it serves are reasons the trustees believed it was fitting the board room carry the VanHerck name.

In October, Dr. VanHerck passed away. MAC President Steve Kurtz shares, "The tremendous amount of growth MAC experienced during the past four decades is due, in part, to his leadership. It is very rare for a person to serve in a public capacity for such a very long period of time. He will be missed for many reasons. In addition to his leadership, he had a great passion for our students. He frequently visited and was attentive to the beauty of the campus, especially the Quadrangle. He was a very proud citizen of Bismarck who was always especially proud when a Bismarck student received accolades or recognition. His absence will be felt deeply at the college. Our thoughts and prayers are with his family and friends."

### • Sports Hall of Fame

The St. Francois County Rotary Club selected two former basketball players as its 2017 MAC Athletic Hall of Fame inductees: **Jerome Freeman** (1968-70) and **Russ Schoene** (1978-80). Both played for Coach Bob Sechrest.

Not only was Jerome a standout basketball player, he was MAC's first black student athlete. He earned NJCAA All-American honors during the 1969-70 season. He transferred to the University of Hawaii where he helped lead the program to a 47-8 record in 1970-72 and still holds 4th place for all-time assists. Jerome and his four starting teammates became known as the "Fabulous Five" after the team qualified for its first-ever NIT and NCAA Tournament appearances during his tenure. Their story spurred a documentary film titled, *The Fabulous Five: the story of the fabulous years* (2008).

Russ, a Region 16 Hall of Fame member, transferred to the University of Tennessee-Chattanooga. He was drafted in the second round of the 1982 NBA Draft by the Philadelphia 76ers and later played for the Indiana Pacers and Seattle Supersonics. In his four NBA seasons, he scored nearly 1,500 points and tallied 735 rebounds. He also played professionally in the Italian League. Russ has coached men's basketball at Bellevue Community College and the University of Washington.

The December 9, 2017, induction ceremony is part of the annual Rotary Shootout which features a full day of high school and college basketball in the Sechrest Field House on the MAC campus.

### • Academic National Champs

Congratulations to **Coach Don Huff** and the entire **2016-17 MAC golf team** on being named Golf Coaches Association of America NJCAA DII Academic National Champions. The golf team finished the year with a 3.52 GPA. Mineral Area was one of six college golf programs that claimed the 2017 Golf Coaches Association of America

NJCAA Academic National Champions. The other schools were Georgia State (Division I), St. Edward's (Division II), Kalamazoo (Division III), Governors State (NAIA) and Central Alabama (NJCAA DI).

### ▼ It's Grand!

The Music Department is thrilled with its newest acquisition, a Yamaha baby grand piano. Despite its recent growth in student enrollment, the choir program's Achilles heel has been a very old Baldwin upright piano. Emily Parker, staff accompanist, explains, "Fifty years ago, the Baldwin was a wonderful piano. However, it hampered student progress because it didn't hold tune properly and it wasn't able to do the job of helping kids hear the pitches. We greatly needed a new piano."

Although the Music Department has searched for a new piano, the funds were never available. So, when the opportunity to acquire the baby grand presented itself, MAC Foundation seized the chance to make the investment. Foundation Board member Dale Wright

says, "It was an easy decision. It was a Murray State recital hall piano that had been sold to a private individual who then sold it to us. We essentially purchased a brand new piano. In this case, a community member had an item that could benefit the college and was willing to sell it for a fraction of the market price. It turned out to be advantageous for both parties."

Director of Choirs Harry Cecil says, "Results were immediate. We saw quick improvement in students' abilities to stay in pitch as they tried to replicate the piano sounds they heard. This piano offers quality, consistent sound and is suited for our classroom, choral and concert environments."

### ► Lady Cards Volleyball Makes MAC Sports History

For the second consecutive year, the **Lady Cards** will play in the NJCAA National Volleyball Tournament. In addition to the tournament appearance, this team is one for MAC's record books. The undefeated regular season record is an impressive sidebar to the team's

**It's Grand! Harry Cecil and Emily Parker are grateful for the support of MAC Foundation in purchasing a new baby grand piano for the Music Department.**



**Lady Cards Volleyball. Megan Blair, Raylyn Dodd and Ainslee Finch display the Region 16 Championship volleyball trophy.**

ambitious pre-season goal of returning to the national tournament.

After defeating John A. Logan to advance to the national tournament, Coach Copeland said, "Going 34-0 was never in my mind, because it's something that usually wouldn't be done." Athletic Director Mike Overman says, "It's been a historic season in many respects. The best we can tell, the Lady Cards made history by being the first-ever undefeated regular season team for any MAC sports teams."

The 13-member team started the season ranked #20 in the nation in the JUCO polls, and finished ranked #8 in the nation with an unblemished 34-0 season record, dropping a scant five sets. They won the Missouri Community College Athletic Conference Championship and the Region 16 Championship. **Coach Tim Copeland** was named Region 16 Coach of the Year, and **Cailey Bracken, Jane Kickham and Pam Zuluaga** received All-Region 16 honors for the second straight year.

The Lady Cards' NJCAA National Tournament adventure concludes while the *Alumni Magazine* is being printed, so follow their post-season highlights as well as team and individual player stats at [www.mineralarea.edu/athletics/womensvolleyball.aspx](http://www.mineralarea.edu/athletics/womensvolleyball.aspx).

### • Friend to Butterfly and Bee

This summer, MAC earned its certification as an affiliate of the Bee Campus USA program, making it the fourth community college and one of 24 educational institutions in the nation

to earn the recognition. Horticulture instructor **Dr. Chad Follis** explains, “This means we meet certain criteria, including a partnership with Parkland Beekeepers and integrated knowledge of insects and pollinators into our curriculum. Next, our campus habitats specifically target pollinators, bees and butterflies. Finally, our public outreach component is achieved via our plant sales, conferences and partnering with outside groups such as the Parkland Beekeepers and Master Gardeners. The University of Missouri is the only other Missouri school with a similar program.”

As for the butterflies, he says, “MAC’s unique because it’s almost the midpoint of the annual migration route as the butterflies travel to and from Mexico. Generally, the butterflies are laying lots of eggs in our area. Because the monarchs experience food shortages during their migration, MAC’s monarch waystations are similar to roadside fast food restaurants for butterflies. To help the monarchs, MAC dedicates three flower and plant beds with specific types of milkweeds on campus.”

● **EXCEL Celebrates 20 Years**

For two decades, exceptional academic support has been provided for MAC’s first-generation and low income students, as well as students with



**Living United: In 2016, MAC Law Enforcement Academy cadets volunteered the most bell ringing hours of all groups for the United Way of St. Francois County.**

disabilities. The TRiO programs include EXCEL, two Upward Bound programs and two Educational Talent Search programs, which emerged gradually following the initial Upward Bound grant. Although many committed endless hours to its success, Jerry Sullivan (currently, the president of MAC’s Board of Trustees) provided the momentum to establish this compilation of federally-funded educational outreach programs to address underserved populations. EXCEL has worked with 2,767 students over its 20 years of service. Countless lives—both students and their families—have been changed through the work of these programs.

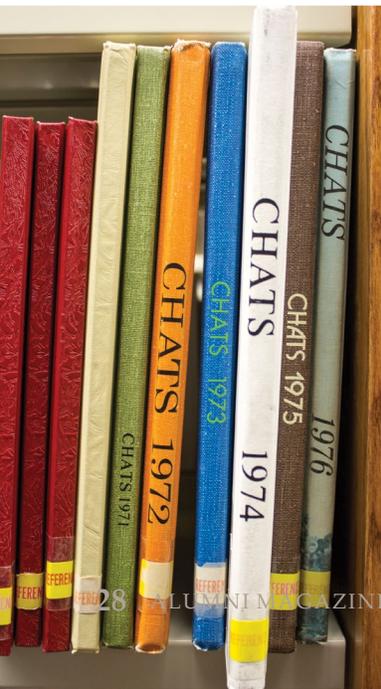
● **Distinguished Teaching Award**

**Esther Blum**, Associate Degree Nursing instructor, is the 2017 recipient of the Phi Theta Kappa Distinguished Teaching Award. Over 300 PTK members had the

opportunity to nominate the recipient of this award. PTK honored her at its fall initiation ceremony. The nomination stated, “Mrs. Blum goes above and beyond to help her students succeed. She comes in early and leaves late to be sure we understand concepts or to help us understand and learn a hands-on skill (i.e. starting an IV or trach care). Her lectures are clear, practical and very dynamic. She is a significant factor in why MAC nursing graduates pass the NCLEX (state boards).”

▲ **Living United**

As a component of their curriculum, MAC’s Law Enforcement Academy cadets learn being involved in the community is an important facet of law enforcement. The cadets participate in the United Way’s Bell Ringing Campaign and organize a variety of events to support the community.



## Seeking Yearbooks & Memorabilia

Did you know MAC will soon celebrate its 100th anniversary? It’s hard to believe Flat River Junior College, MAC’s predecessor, was founded in 1922—nearly 100 years ago! To mark the occasion, we’re collecting memorabilia to document the college’s century of service. Do you, your parents or your children have any *Chats* yearbooks, MAC newspapers or commencement programs in a closet or stored in the basement? *Chats* yearbooks were published during school years 1922-23 through 1975-76. We would like our collection to include all 54 volumes. Maybe you have one of these missing yearbooks and care to donate.

**To donate items**, please drop off or mail items to Rodney Wilson at Mineral Area College, P.O. Box 1000, Park Hills, MO 63601. If you have photographic or paper items you want to keep but would allow the college to digitize, contact Rodney at (573) 518-2353 or [RWilson@MineralArea.edu](mailto:RWilson@MineralArea.edu).

**Missing yearbooks:** 1924, 1925, 1927, 1932, 1933, 1934, 1935, 1937, 1945 and 1956.

● **Medallion Awards**

You are looking at the talents and work of MAC's Graphic Designer **Julia Dill**. She is "the one" who designs our *Alumni Magazine*. Her graphic design creativity and artistry earned two Medallion Awards during the 2017 annual District 5, National Council for Marketing and Public Relations (NCMPR) conference.

Our *Alumni Magazine* received NCMPR recognition for its layout and design. The second Medallion Award acknowledged a series of posters Julia designed for the college's Little Theatre Guild productions. Board of Trustees President Jerry Sullivan praised Julia for her work and the recognition her talents brought to MAC.

NCMPR is the only professional organization geared specifically to community college marketing professionals in North America, and District 5 includes community college marketers in Iowa, Kansas, Minnesota, Missouri, Nebraska, the Dakotas, the Canadian province of Manitoba, Puerto Rico and the Virgin Islands.

▶ **FRJC & MAC Alumni Breakfast**

Alumni greeted each other with smiles, hugs and laughter at the annual FRJC & MAC Alumni Breakfast. Photos and yearbooks sparked memories about favorite instructors, classmates, activities and sports. Plan to attend next year's luncheons and reunions.

▼ **The Wow Factor**

Students are the wow factor at the Community Ladies Luncheon. They share inspiring stories about how MAC helps shape their academic and personal goals. Some explain the advantages of earning a degree while staying close to home and out of debt. Others tell of total transformations and achieving dreams. They mention some of MAC's longstanding cornerstones—the welcoming campus, personalized attention, quality faculty and academics, and lifetime friendships.

*To add your name to reunion or luncheon mailing lists, contact Teri LaChance at (573) 518-2114 or [talachan@MineralArea.edu](mailto:talachan@MineralArea.edu).*

**The Wow Factor: Brandon Wagner (Park Hills), Darrick Hall (Menan, ID), Corben Crites (Farmington), Shayna Snell (Perryville), Ricardo Devoto (Buenos Aires, Argentina), Chelsey Dispenziere (Farmington), Makenzie Smith (Greenville) and Victoria Cunningham (Farmington).**



FRJC and MAC alumni reunite over breakfast.



P.O. Box 1000  
Park Hills, MO 63601

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**News or Address Changes?**

(573) 518-2114 • Alumni@MineralArea.edu

Mineral Area College does not discriminate against any person on the basis of race, color, national origin, disability, or age in admission, treatment, or participation in its programs, services and activities, or in employment. For further information about this policy, contact the Dean of Student Services, (573) 518-2154, 5270 Flat River Road, Park Hills, MO 63601. Inquiries also may be directed to the U.S. Department of Education, Office of Civil Rights at OCR.KansasCity@ed.gov.



# HOLIDAY BIG BAND DINNER & DANCE

**Wednesday, December 13**

*Featuring MAC Jazz Ensemble, Jazz Combo & Jazz Singers • Dinner Catered by Mario's Italia and Orange Blossom Cupcakes  
Silent Auction Items Donated by Businesses and Individuals in the Mineral Area*

**Alexander's at The Factory, Farmington • 5:30pm Doors Open, 6pm Dinner, 6:30pm Music Begins**  
Tickets at the Door or Call (573) 518-2246 • Adults \$20, Students \$13, Couples \$35, Table of Eight \$125



**Enjoy**

**Peace of Mind**

**this Holiday Season**

## SET YOUR SPRING SCHEDULE NOW!

**Students are Enrolling in Spring Classes which Start January 16.**

Contact Admissions or an Advisor Today. (855) MAC-4YOU • Admissions@MineralArea.edu