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**Contributors**

KATHERINE WHITE
SHANE STINSON
HUONG TRUONG
MARIA URIZAR
ANDRE MASON
SYLVIA MASON
ALEXIA MAJORS
NOSA EKE
BEN BROOKS
SARAH SABATKE
JANIE BOOTH
JAMIE CROCKETT
CAILIN RILEY

**Production**

EDITORIAL MANAGEMENT
NOOR AZIZAN-GARDNER
KEVIN MCDONALD
RON STODGHILL

EDITORS
RYAN GAVIN
MORGAN MCABOY-YOUNG

ART DIRECTION
EVA REIGN THOMAS
Message from MU IDE Vice Chancellor

DR. KEVIN MCDONALD

It has been a little over 1½ years since I accepted the opportunity to lead the Division of Inclusion, Diversity & Equity here at the University of Missouri. In that time frame, I have had the privilege of working closely with faculty, staff, students, alumni and local community members who are dedicated to making intentional strides around diversity, equity and inclusion.

It is well documented that teaching, research, scholarship and service benefit tremendously from the infusion of diverse perspectives, derived from a variety of lived experiences, interactions and interpretations. Through the official MU IDE e-magazine, our division will share stories with you that highlight these intersections.

I am excited to share the first issue of IDENTIFY for a number of reasons. First, it is important for the campus community, local community and citizens of this great state to be apprised of the work that IDE and other constituents are doing to collaboratively foster and further inclusivity throughout our region and our world. In this edition of IDENTIFY, you will learn more about individuals across campus and their efforts to infuse diversity, equity, and inclusion into the academic, administrative and civic enterprises. Second, this newsletter will serve as a resource for those who desire to infuse promising practices into their own activities on campus or throughout the state.

Much thought was put into what the actual name for this communications piece should be. It was equally important that we, as a division, be able to capture the very essence of our work while creating an opportunity for audiences to think critically about their role in this community, our state and our world. The division explored several possibilities, and I am proud to report that IDENTIFY rose to the top. After reading over the pages in this issue, I am sure you will be able to see how themes weaved throughout the stories shared speak volumes to our ability to acknowledge various experiences and grow from them. Every voice in our university, local, and state communities are important, and we will continue to share their stories with you in future issues of IDENTIFY.

MU is embarking on an important journey toward inclusion, and I am grateful to all of our cross-functional partners who are partnering with IDE on this journey. Together, we will foster an inclusive living, learning and working environment where everyone is valued, respected, and supported. To learn more about how you can get involved, please visit diversity.missouri.edu.

Sincerely,

Dr. Kevin McDonald
Vice Chancellor, IDE

You will learn more about individuals across campus and their efforts to infuse diversity equity, and inclusion into the academic, administrative, and civic enterprises.
IN RESPONSE TO NEEDS COMMUNICATED to the university by the Legion of Black Collegians and Concerned Student 1950, the Division of Inclusion, Diversity & Equity is taking action to make our MU stronger.

The Division of Inclusion, Diversity & Equity (IDE) was created in the fall of 2015 to foster an inclusive living, learning, and working community where everyone is valued and inspired to reach their full potential.

IDE achieves this overarching goal through programming efforts, support services and learning spaces that include: Citizenship@Mizzou; CitizenshipToo; Diversity Peer Educators; the Gaines/Oldham Black Culture Center; the LGBTQ Resource Center; the Multicultural Center; the Office for Civil Rights, Title IX and ADA; the Office for Inclusive Engagement’s Diversity101 and Workplace Diversity series; the RSVP Center; and a comprehensive faculty recruitment and retention plan.

IDE IS IN ITS SECOND YEAR with Dr. Kevin McDonald at the helm. McDonald now serves as permanent Vice Chancellor of IDE on the MU campus as well as the Chief Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Officer for UM System.

The 2017 annual MU Celebrates Martin Luther King Jr. event set new standards. The 1,200-seat Missouri Theatre was filled to capacity, and several hundred more people watched remotely. Over 92 percent of people surveyed after the program gave it the highest marks possible.

MOCHA: Men of Color, Honor and Ambition. IDE supports MOCHA’s implementation in Columbia Public Schools. MOCHA provides personal, academic, cultural, social, professional and leadership development to students to positively impact success, increase retention and develop successful leaders.

SUMMER WELCOME DIVERSITY VIDEO: In partnership with New Student Programs and the Academic Support Center, IDE created a video to explain the division to all incoming students. It honestly addresses concepts of inclusion and diversity and issues students might face, introduced where they might turn and how to build a positive community for all at Mizzou.

INCLUSIVE EXCELLENCE: Leaders have adopted the Inclusive Excellence Framework, which is designed to help MU integrate diversity and equality efforts. The framework outlines strategies that seek to increase student enrollment of historically underrepresented and underserved populations, recruit and retain a more diverse faculty and staff, create a climate that is supportive and respectful and that values differing perspectives, and more.

In Fall 2017, IDE hosted the first New Multicultural Faculty and Staff Reception. Over 200 faculty and staff participated. Attendees, who were afforded an opportunity to network with colleagues from across campus during the event. Several academic deans were in attendance to show support for recruiting diverse unit members.

Please visit goo.gl/Pvboj7 for even more examples and accomplishments from the division!
If you’ve attended any Tigers athletics event this year, chances are that you’ve already seen the latest collaboration between Mizzou Athletics and the Division of Inclusion, Diversity & Equity: the Mizzou Principles of Community. Prior to all contests, a video plays explaining what they are and what we value as an institution.

The collaboration was forged in a meeting between IDE and Athletics’ Mizzou Made program. The Principles reaffirm support for the university’s values and also reflect the standards of inclusion, diversity and accessibility. They are an aspirational statement that embodies Mizzou’s commitment to these ideals.

The inaugural Mizzou Principles of Community Mile run was held in May 2017. There, the Principles were unveiled to a mix of Mizzou and Columbia community members, and the several-hundred participants received shirts emblazoned with the statement. Plans for the second-annual event are under way.

Below is the text of the pledge that we have adopted and practice as fundamental to our ongoing efforts to increase access and inclusion and to create a community that nurtures learning and growing for all of its members.

We affirm the inherent dignity and value of every person and strive to maintain a climate for work and learning based on mutual respect and understanding.

We affirm the right of each person to express thoughts and opinions freely. We encourage open expression within a climate of civility, sensitivity and mutual respect.

We affirm the value of human diversity because it enriches our lives and our organizations. We acknowledge and respect our differences while affirming our common humanity.

We reject all forms of prejudice and discrimination, including those based on age, color, diverse ability, gender, gender identity, gender expression, national origin, political affiliation, race, religion, sexual orientation and veteran status. We take individual and collective responsibility for helping to eliminate bias and discrimination and for increasing our own understanding of these issues through education, training and interaction with others.

We pledge our collective commitment to uphold these principles in the totality of our life together and in accordance with the University of Missouri’s values of Respect, Responsibility, Discovery and Excellence.
If you ask higher education professionals to identify one obstacle that keeps students from completing college coursework, they will likely mention lack of available financial resources first. Three new leaders at the University of Missouri are changing how industry professionals and in-state students view college access and affordability with the innovative Missouri Land Grant Compact.

Chancellor Alexander Cartwright; Vice Chancellor for Inclusion, Diversity & Equity Kevin McDonald and Vice Provost for Enrollment Management Pelema Morrice are new to the campus community, but the trio is not unfamiliar with implementing initiatives that impact students for generations to come. These top-level administrators—none at Mizzou for more than a year and a half—are leveraging years of experience in higher education to build relationships that increase opportunities for current and prospective students.

“As the founders of this university did nearly 180 years ago, we are reaffirming our pledge to provide access to higher education with the belief that an educated citizenry is the key to advancing the state of Missouri, our nation and world,” Cartwright said. “It is a tremendous honor as chancellor to sign this historic compact and invest in attracting the state’s best and brightest.

In the spirit of collaboration, the group partnered to foster internal and external support for grants that reaffirm the university’s pledge to fulfill its land-grant mission to offer affordable education to Missouri residents. Earlier this fall, the Missouri Land Grant Compact was presented to the campus community with an expected roll out date in fall 2018.

The concept for the Missouri Land Grant Compact was modeled after the MU Division of Inclusion, Diversity & Equity’s Inclusive Excellence Framework, which McDonald first introduced to the campus community in fall 2016. Objectives outlined in the strategic framework target several improvement areas, including increasing access to under-served and underrepresented students in rural and urban portions of the state.

“Inherent in the diversity of lived experiences that come to Mizzou are opportunities to equip our students, faculty and staff with the tools to navigate their experiences and interactions with people,” McDonald said. “Our goal is to graduate our students to operate as effective citizens in a global marketplace. To do that, organizations are wanting students with multicultural competencies and the ability to work in interdisciplinary teams. We are going to create these opportunities.”

As part of the compact, MU will offer the Missouri Land Grant and Missouri Land Grant Honors for Missouri residents. The Missouri Land Grant will cover all tuition and fees for all Pell-eligible Missouri residents who qualify for admission to MU. Missouri Land Grant Honors will meet 100 percent of unmet financial need, including tuition, fees, books and room and board, for Pell-eligible students enrolled in the MU Honors College.

The compact means that thousands of students will be able to attend the university tuition-free. Based on current enrollment, it’s expected that more than 3,500 Mizzou students from Missouri will qualify for the grants annually.

“We are at a special time in our institutional history — one that requires all of us to be very reflective about why we are here, and who we are here to serve,” Morrice said.
Ever since Michael Brown was shot on Aug. 9, 2014, igniting racial tensions, Ferguson resident Tiana Glass knew she wanted to find a way to give back to her community.

She didn’t see many black-owned businesses in her hometown, and she wanted to change that. Now a senior at MU studying women’s and gender studies, she came up with an idea for a bath and body cosmetic line, planned a store layout and applied to the Missouri Student Unions Entrepreneurial Program to get a space for her store at MU.

"August 9th absolutely changed my life forever," Glass said. "There weren’t a lot of black-owned businesses in Ferguson, and so I really want this business to jump-start that, to support my other community members to start their own businesses and have it to be successful."

She recently celebrated the grand opening of the business she created, Black Honey Bee Cosmetics, in the MU Student Center.

Dynasty Avila, an MU junior studying health science who works for the store, said it offers a bath and body cosmetic line aimed at empowering women of color.

"Black Honey Bee Cosmetics is a store that’s rooted in empowerment of women of color as well as healing and consciousness of self," Avila said. "This is a very important shop that I really haven’t seen anywhere before."

Products in the store, which include bath bombs, shower bombs, bubble bath bars and lotion bars, are named after women of color or references to black popular culture. Among others, there’s soap named after the South African singer Miriam Makeba and bath bombs named after African-American playwright Lorraine Hansberry. Glass made all the products herself in her apartment.

"I really wanted to embody that idea of blackness and to share that with other people," Glass said.

Avila said many MU students will identify with the store’s mission and its products.

"I think it’s a great representation of what our campus looks like," Avila said. "We walk around campus every day and we don’t see stores that are representative for us, especially for our minority identities, on this campus."

While the store is focused on empowering women of color, anyone is invited to visit and shop.

"Even if you don’t identify as a woman of color, you’re so welcome to come here and buy things and support a black-owned business," Avila said.

Kennedi Keyes, a junior at MU studying communication science and disorders, attended the opening ceremony and bought a bath bomb as one of the store’s first customers.

“I like what (Glass) stood for as far as black women of color and inclusiveness at the university especially," Keyes said. “That’s why it spoke to me."

Keyes said she loved the store, which she called a black take on the popular beauty store Lush. She said it’s a place for students of any gender or ethnicity to meet and learn about each other.

"It'll hopefully be a gateway for people who identify and people who don’t identify (as a woman of color) to kind of come together," Keyes said. "Also, it’s a place for people who identify (as a woman of color) to have an outlet and a place to go and be included and welcomed. I’m so happy this is here."

Glass came up with the idea for the store about a year and a half ago. She applied to the Missouri Student Unions’ Entrepreneurial Program last spring semester. The program selects which student-run stores to occupy spaces in the Student Center. The application process involves several steps, such as creating a business plan and being interviewed.

Glass started the physical setup of the store early July.

"I did this from scratch," Glass said. "I designed everything myself. I knew what colors I wanted, I knew what the vision was, I knew what I wanted on that wall."

A team of workers and friends helped Glass set up and run the store.

“I’m really grateful for this opportunity and for the people I surrounded myself with, because without them, I could not have done it," Glass said. "It has been a beautiful struggle, one that I’m so proud of." 

Glass said the support for Black Honey Bee Cosmetics has been overwhelmingly positive since the beginning. Her goal for the future is to ship her cosmetics across the country to reach a wider audience.

“It’s really revolutionary," Glass said. “For me to be a black woman and to own this is really breaking barriers."
Early this fall, a group of 11 student journalists at Mizzou launched a series of tough conversations around race, class and culture. The setting was Advanced Writing 4986-1, a capstone course I taught at the university’s School of Journalism; the objective was figuring out how these young writers might fashion a series of stories that captured their changing attitudes and perceptions about life at MU two years after 2015’s racially charged student protests.

On the surface, my class seemed sure-footed about taking on such a project. Journalistic instinct told them that the two-year milestone necessitated a fresh look at MU’s push to make the campus and the community a more equitable and inclusive place for everyone. But that certainty masked deeper reservations about their ability to write honestly and accurately about the cultural realities that had fractured the campus. Ironically, the racial composition of the class seemed to underscore their perceived editorial drawback: with the exception of two students of color (one Asian American and the other an international student) the class was entirely white. Could a group of nearly all white writers, with similar socioeconomic backgrounds, provide quality coverage to readers on a subject as complex and divisive as race and class in America?

The answer to that question was featured prominently this past November, a week before Thanksgiving, within the pages of Vox magazine, the weekly Columbia Missourian insert, which published a collection of student essays about the protests and aftermath. The pieces, which balance first-person narrative with hard-boiled reportage, wrestle thoughtfully about how race and class shape life at the university and the surrounding community, in the classrooms and courts system, public parks, churches and elsewhere.

“So much has been written about the 2015 protests, and so much of what happened shapes our perception of race resides in the minute, personal moments of our shared experience as humans,” Brooks Holton, a Louisville native, writes in the introduction. “Nobody has all the answers to the solving the painful divisions of race and class, find ways to access the topic through their own experience and biography — along the way, surprising themselves with truths they unearthed.

For example, Colorado-born senior Linsey Jenkins grappled with the limitations of white privilege by writing about her struggle to gain acceptance in the church as a queer white woman; Dan Schwartz wrote candidly about how his parents’ affluence bought resources that helped him survive and eventually thrive in school despite a learning disability — an unearned advantage that plays out in how Missouri doles out merit-based scholarships; Miranda Moore chronicled her previous life as a former federal prosecutiona paralegal, lamenting her role in the prison pipeline.

“I spent several years of my life as part of the system that purports to dole out justice,” Moore writes. “People are in prison because I helped put them there. I believe, based on the evidence I helped present against them, that they are guilty of the crimes they were convicted of. But I can no longer find it within myself to work towards convictions that separate families, knowing that I contributed to their disintegration.”

As my students discovered important truths about themselves, I learned some valuable lessons about the power of inclusive teaching; about recognizing that all students should have a real stake in the topics we want them to engage and explore. No matter our ideals, classrooms don’t exist inside a culturally neutral bubble; teaching strategies and pedagogy should reflect the reality of their differences — even, when on the surface, they appear quite similar. Here’s what’s most gratifying about what students have shared: beyond the thrill of participating in a high-profile magazine feature, the exercise brought them closer to their own true thinking about social inequality that they’ll carry through life.

To be sure, our project was far from perfect. By now, like any fussy editor, I’ve had time to re-read the pieces many times over only to discover, alas, paragraphs that could have used more trimming, language that could have been more precise, ideas that deserved a bit more of fleshing out. Overall, though, through inclusive learning, we pulled off what good journalists endeavor to do in our profession: we sought the truth and told it as best we could.
Junot Díaz was born in the Dominican Republic and raised in New Jersey. He is the author of the critically acclaimed "Drown," "The Brief Wondrous Life of Oscar Wao," which won the 2008 Pulitzer Prize and the National Book Critics Circle Award; and "This Is How You Lose Her," a New York Times bestseller and National Book Award finalist. Díaz is the recipient of a MacArthur "Genius" Fellowship, PEN/Malamud Award, Dayton Literary Peace Prize, Guggenheim Fellowship, and PEN/O. Henry Award. He is the co-founder of the Voices of Our National Arts Foundation, which focuses on writers of color.

Díaz also serves on the board of advisers for Freedom University, a volunteer organization in Georgia that provides postsecondary instruction to undocumented immigrants. Central to his work is the immigrant experience. Díaz immigrated with his family to New Jersey when he was six-years old. During an interview conducted in 2010, Díaz reflected on his experience growing up in America and working his way through college:

"I can safely say I’ve seen the U.S. from the bottom up ... I may be a success story as an individual. But if you adjust the knob and just take it back one setting to the family unit, I would say my family tells a much more complicated story. It tells the story of two kids in prison. It tells the story of enormous poverty, of tremendous difficulty."

Díaz has been active in a number of community organizations in New York City, from Pro-Libertad, to the Communist Dominican Workers’ Party [Partido de los Trabajadores Dominicanos], and the Unión de Jóvenes Dominicanos ("Dominican Youth Union"). A graduate of Rutgers University, Díaz is currently the fiction editor at the Boston Review and the Rudge and Nancy Allen Professor of Writing at Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT).


MLK Award

Established in 2007, the University of Missouri Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Award recognizes and affirms those in the Columbia community who have made significant tangible contributions in the areas of race relations, justice and human rights. Each year, the MU Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Celebration Planning Committee selects a Boone County resident or group to receive this award in recognition of extraordinary leadership and inspiration in furthering the goal of achieving greater cultural and ethnic diversity in the community. The award will be presented during the annual campus celebration.

Learn more or nominate a worthy recipient at mlk.missouri.edu
Students from the Missouri International Student Council (MISC) celebrated International Day with the annual flag parade from Jesse Hall to Traditions Plaza. Mizzou is home to students from over 100 countries around the world. You are welcome here!

Photos by RYAN GAVIN
Alexia Majors

St. Louis native Alexia Majors, a 2015 graduate, has found her niche at the Missouri State Capitol in Jefferson City. Thanks to the educational experiences she received as an undergraduate student double majoring in communications and sociology at Mizzou, Majors is now helping to engage more Missouri citizens in the political processes as a communications coordinator in the Missouri House of Representatives. Majors has been employed with the Missouri House of Representatives since October 2015. She credits Mizzou for sharpening her writing skills and challenging her to think outside the box.

**IDENTIFY:** What helped shape your college experience at Mizzou?

**ALEXIA MAJORS:**
The people. Mizzou is a huge melting pot, so many different cities, ethnicities and backgrounds. I felt like I was learning constantly, becoming more aware of my surroundings and my approach to certain scenarios, not just academically but socially.

The social component was good for me because I think being socially aware of your surroundings is a huge part of life; it is an awareness that we cannot necessarily be taught or exposed to via textbook. Whether these individuals were students, staff or faculty, the people I encountered and spent time with at Mizzou directly impacted my college experience.

**IDENTIFY:** How have you been involved with Mizzou since graduation?

**MAJORS:**
I have participated in the Missouri Legislative Black Caucus Foundation’s Emerging Leaders Conference, assisting with their mock floor debates. I had the pleasure of meeting and getting to know a number of the students participating in the conference. It is always inspiring to be a part of a program geared toward empowering our youth, and even more inspiring to see our youth so enthusiastic about expanding their knowledge and leaving their mark on the world.

**IDENTIFY:** How has the education you received from Mizzou been beneficial to your career?

**MAJORS:**
In my courses, I was introduced to the many different facets of communication: one being political communication. From those experiences, I have been able to take the ideas and knowledge I gained and apply them to the situations that present themselves in my current position. Mizzou also helped sharpen my writing skills, take deadlines more seriously and to think outside the box.

**IDENTIFY:** As a result of the work that you do, what impact do you hope to have on Missourians?

**MAJORS:**
In my opinion, the reason that individuals, especially our youth, shy away from the topic of politics is because they do not necessarily understand it or what is going on. Many are oblivious to the fact that the laws passed or events taking place have a direct effect on maybe not their lives, but the lives of people they are close to.

I, too, have struggled to understand the role politics played in my life. In my current position, I feel as though I have a platform that can be utilized to put different topics into perspective while relaying information in a way that people can better understand and relate to what is going on.
Tiger Parents share their experience with college life at Mizzou

More times than not, the discussion around transitioning from high school to college focuses solely on the student perspective. However, there are a number of key players involved in making sure that Mizzou students have a beneficial experience on campus regardless of the distance travelled to Columbia, Mo., for classes.

Aside from faculty, staff, administrators and peers, parents play a critical role in the success of students on college campuses. Studies show that with a firm support base in place, primarily made up of parents and academic support services, students are more likely to complete a college program in 4½ years or less.

Because the parent perspective on college is an essential part of student success, the MU Office of Parent Relations and the Division of Inclusion, Diversity & Equity have teamed up to share stories from Mizzou parents who know firsthand that it takes a village to help students achieve their academic and career goals.

Words by ANDRE & SYLVIA MASON

My husband and I both knew after 30 minutes on campus that our daughter Gabbie, our oldest child, had decided this was her first, second and third choice for college. She loved it immediately! Our second child, Rod, decided his sister was having fun, happy and doing well with classes and he, too, would be a Tiger. We were elated! How could we get so lucky? One college visit for two kids!

A big reason for our happiness with their choice of Mizzou is the mentorship they have received from Devara Brock in the Center for Academic Success & Excellence. Having Ms. Brock as a Mizzou contact was truly a godsend. Not only is she patient with my children, she is also extremely patient with me! Her knowledge of organizations has helped my Tigers with everything from studies to socializing. And her ability to offer patience and much needed guidance on how to juggle their busy class schedules, extra-curricular activities, and jobs is a special quality.

Knowing there is someone on campus who cares enough to be there for my children and many other young adults reinforces that my children are at the best university for our family.

Gabbie is a senior, has traveled to Florence, Italy, with Mizzou, and is looking forward to spreading her wings and working in hospitality management after May 2018 graduation. Rod is loving life as a sophomore living off campus and staying focused and driven. Both students speak of Ms. Brock weekly, make sure they keep her updated on success or concerns and treat her like family. She has gone above and beyond her actual duty and has made a significant difference in our lives.

Mizzou, we thank you for Ms. Brock! She has been a wonderful mentor and has helped prepare our children for life after University of Missouri.

Knowing that there is someone on that huge campus who cares enough to be there for my children and many other young adults reinforces that my children are at the best university for our family.
Dear Parents of New Students,

I’m very happy to be sharing with you the experience I’ve gone through with my daughter ever since she’s been at Mizzou. It has been bittersweet seeing her go away to college because part of me rejoiced at the fact that she was going to her dream school, but that meant she would be hours from my husband and I. What gave me comfort, and what I hope gives you comfort, is having visited Mizzou and seeing all it had to offer my daughter. The communication we had grew over the time she was away from us, and that helped me cope with being worried about what she could be going through by herself.

For all parents, but specifically Latino parents, I would recommend that your communication with your son/daughter stay important. Having that closeness will make you feel like all their accomplishments are yours as well. My last piece of advice for Latino families is to please not let language be a barrier in staying up-to-date with how your son/daughter is doing in school. Help is always there. And always remember that when you go pick up your son/daughter at the end of the semester to take in all your surroundings and admire the beauty of it. Feel proud because all the success your son/daughter is accomplishing is thanks to your support, confidence and love.

Photo courtesy of Maria Urizar

From left: Mayela and Maria Urizar

Maria Urizar provides advice to new MU Parents

Words by MARIA URIZAR
STAYING BUSY

MIZZOU STUDENT MAKES CONNECTION HERE & ABROAD

Nosu Eke, a bioengineering major from Kansas City, stays busy at Mizzou.

Beyond his studies in the College of Engineering, Eke is president of his fraternity, the United Ambassadors Diversity Recruitment Team and the National Society of Black Engineers.

As one of three co-chairs for the MU United Ambassadors Diversity Recruitment Team, Eke recruits students from across the country to attend Mizzou. Eke says his involvement efforts have greatly contributed to his happiness at Mizzou.

“The most important part of my college experience would definitely have to be the friends and connections I’ve made through my involvement,” Eke said.

One of Eke’s most memorable experiences at Mizzou was traveling to Greece for a study aboard intercession course in engineering as a freshman.

“The trip was amazing and allowed me to experience a different culture and see how engineering affects them,” Eke said.

He attributes all his success at Mizzou to the great people he has come into contact with in his short time at the university.

GOOD MORNING, VIETNAM!

MIZZOU GRADUATE STUDENT FELL IN LOVE WITH INTERNATIONAL SERVICE DURING HER TIME HERE

Growing up as an Army brat and hopping from base to base, Alison Bonner knew it was extremely important to find a college community to call ‘home.’

Columbia and Mizzou fit that mold perfectly. Bonner is a graduate student in the Truman School of Public Affairs. She graduated from MU this past May with a bachelor’s degree in political science and a minor in leadership and public service.

After finishing her undergraduate degree, Bonner interned in the Office of Service-Learning. Later, as a Truman School student, she was given the opportunity to plan a month-long service trip for 11 MU students, including herself, to Ho Chi Minh City, Vietnam. The students worked at various nonprofits, with Bonner working at an organization teaching English to children while their parents are at work.

Over the weekends, Bonner had the opportunity to travel and see a bit more of Vietnam. She visited the Mekong Delta, the Cu Chi Tunnels and the Red and White Sand Dunes in Muine. Through her service trip, Bonner experienced Vietnamese culture. She was impressed by how many hardworking, gracious and humble people she met there.

Bonner is excited to continue working in the Office of Service-Learning this year and teaching prospective students how impactful global service internships can be. Through her experience, she learned how culture and public service are interconnected.

“There are so many ways to be involved in service, and it truly will make your academic experience at MU more meaningful,” Bonner said.
-transfer student co-founds youth development program while at mu

Ben Brooks, a Columbia, Missouri local, is a junior majoring in international business and psychology here at Mizzou. Brooks says although he attended Lindenwood University for track his first two years, he transferred to Mizzou last spring because of the great experiences he had with the university growing up in Columbia.

Despite his just beginning his time officially at Mizzou, Brooks has been busy growing and managing Ukatsu, a youth development program for young gamers that he co-founded. Ukatsu provides a physical space for young gamers to gather and develop positive relationships and social skills.

The program also has an emphasis on finding ways for kids to be more active and exercise, while still enjoying their passion for gaming.

Brooks says his favorite experience at Mizzou was getting the news that his program will receive funding from Mizzou to further flesh out their first actual facility. He also is finalizing a contract with Columbia public schools to create an eSports program for next spring.

His advice to students is to take advantage of everything the school has to offer.

"There are so many resources you can use to make yourself more successful professionally outside of the classroom."

Graduate student chooses Mizzou master’s program over job back home

When Mohammed Aldawsari left his home in Saudi Arabia to pursue a master’s degree in computer science at Mizzou, it wasn’t a particularly easy decision.

A computer company in Riyadh, the capital city, had offered Aldawsari his dream job as a systems analyst — an offer he almost couldn’t refuse. However, a loved one caused him to consider taking a chance on Mizzou.

"My sister, who’s also a Mizzou student, talked to me about Mizzou and how the people and atmosphere of Mizzou are great," Aldawsari said. "I thought I should take this opportunity and come to Mizzou with her.

"He faced a difficult choice but decided studying abroad at Mizzou was a way he could challenge himself. Aldawsari has learned a lot both academically and personally. He says he has no regrets about his decision."

What I really love about being here is the diversity of people," he said. "It’s given me the chance to learn about other cultures, opinions and to share knowledge. I cannot wait to see what the future still has for me at Mizzou."
Tucked away on the bottom floor of Townsend Hall on the University of Missouri campus, a new piece of technology is changing the lives of bullied kids in schools throughout Missouri.

Spanning across an entire wall of the Nureva room, the Nureva Span system acts like a projector that senses when people interact with objects projected on the wall and allows them to move things around as they please.

The software can handle up to 20 people interacting at one time, and the workspace can expand up to 200 feet. Although the system was designed by Nureva for businesses, the company has begun testing the system’s potential in classrooms across the nation, including Mizzou’s College of Education.

The Mizzou Ed Bullying Prevention Lab is led by Chad Rose, associate professor in the Department of Special Education. The five graduate and 22 undergraduate students on the team aid Rose with developing programs and interventions to combat bullying before putting them into practice in more than 25 schools.

Rose says more than 50 percent of their student team members are from Missouri towns, including places such as Fenton, Sedalia, Washington and Appleton City, that could benefit from their actions here at Mizzou.

Rose says because of the students’ investment in their work in the lab, they have established a positive team atmosphere where everybody has some level of ownership over the project. Now, the Nureva Span System is helping the lab grow the college’s outreach efforts.

Christine Terry, director of eMints, a national program that helps educators integrate technology into classrooms on campus, says the Nureva system allows the college to bring the expertise of the team out to even the most remote communities in Missouri.

Many of these rural schools do not have the resources to bring Rose out for a whole day, but the system allows his team to have a hands-on, face-to-face-like interaction with remote schools.

“For Chad to go out and spend an hour at a school in the Bootheel is a day-and-a-half investment,” Terry said. “But if he can do these types of experiences with the Span system, he can give any school in Missouri the same high-quality experience in only two hours at no additional expense.”

In the middle of September, Rose’s team piled into the Nureva Room to video chat with Tyson Ellison, a seventh-grader at Laura Speed Elliott Middle School, to kick-start a program to help middle school kids become a liaison between bullied kids and counselors.

Rose says his team plans to give support to Ellison’s project because they believe the community has to become involved to stop bullying.

“My team and I have been working with Boonville for a long time, and what we’ve demonstrated is that bullying is a community issue that involves community members, schools and parents,” Rose said. “Bullying doesn’t just begin and end when students leave the school building.”

Rose says the system can help him train counselors in remote schools so they can carry on bullying prevention techniques on their own. He believes that the technology not only will make his team more efficient, but it will also create a collaboration between higher education and communities that want to put a stop to bullying.

“No longer do we have to have schools carrying the load of bully prevention,” Rose said. “Now what we can do is say let’s enter into a partnership, where bullying prevention is part of our community, where we’re all speaking the same language, because the issue of bullying impacts us all.”
S hane Stinson, the guest relations coordinator for the Missouri Student Unions, has worked at Mizzou for more than six years. He loves working for a university that has given so much to him. “Mizzou helped craft the space for my growth,” Stinson says. “This university gave me the tools to accept and love myself. I love working at Mizzou because I get to be a part of creating that environment for other students and staff/faculty.”

“Learning to embrace and love myself was a vital part of my journey and it is for other people who are on this campus. I believe creating a culture where people learn to embrace who they are fosters empowerment and authenticity. Being a part of that culture at Mizzou makes my work that much more meaningful.”

For those considering Mizzou as their home, either as a student or a member of Mizzou’s faculty or staff, Stinson encourages them to focus on making memories and finding your own niche.

“This experience can be everything you want it to be. Mizzou will become your home and the love you feel for it will last a lifetime,” he says.
At the University of Missouri, we're doing more than just talking about issues of diversity and inclusion. Our actions define us. Let us *show you* how we're making a difference.

The Division of Inclusion, Diversity & Equity leads the way through innovative programming like Citizenship@Mizzou for first-year students. Our five social justice centers — some of the largest and oldest in the country — host hundreds of university events while also providing spaces for students to find community at Mizzou. Through student, faculty and staff development and educational offerings, we're providing the foundation Mizzou needs to be a place where everybody feels a true sense of belonging.

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