Our goal is to make sure our students of color are successful and that the School of Journalism and the University of Missouri is a place they feel comfortable.
Teanna Bass worried she might not make it to graduation. Using her makeup skills and a homemade lamp, she found herself in helping others.

Feeling drained, Bass knows she needs to connect to a greater sense of purpose. For her, that has always been makeup. Bass loves being creative with color. But even more, she loves helping people feel more secure in how they look. In a culture of personal space, where it’s impolite to stare, she is allowed to draw close and look deeply.

“The best thing I ever did for somebody was make them feel more of themselves,” she says. “As soon as they sit in my chair, I compliment them about whatever I can, whatever you can tell they might be insecure about. You make them feel good in the process of making them up. I’m their therapist in that moment. It’s a pretty intimate moment.”

So she decides to pursue makeup again. She builds a ring light using cardboard, aluminum foil, Christmas lights and a tripod. She buys a folding table and covers it with a tablecloth. She lays out her supplies and, for the next two years, works her own makeshift salon from her apartment. At busy times, such as around Homecoming, she earns $1,000.

Junior year, she sees the Missouri Student Unions Entrepreneurship Program is accepting applications for new stores. Despite already owning a successful business, Bass is filled with self-doubt. She puts off the application until the last minute before finally psyching herself up with the adage, “You miss 100 percent of the shots you don’t take.”

She create a business plan and successfully presents her idea to the program selection committee. “It’s still a surprise to me,” Bass says the week before her opening. “I’m pretty sure on the day it opens, it will still be a surprise to me.”

MAKEUP MOGUL

Sweet Tea Cosmetics — named for her twin sister’s sweet tea addiction as well as a shortening of “Teanna” — opened Sept. 12 in the MU Student Center.

Bass held a grand-opening ceremony attended by about 50 family and friends. She toasted them all with a glass of sparkling grape juice.

Bass, now a senior, will offer makeup services and sell her own private-label makeup line, a dream she’s had since she was a freshman.

For the past two years, Bass has researched companies that could produce the exact kind of makeup product she would want to buy, which is the only product she is willing to sell.

“I want it to have the same values as I have,” she says. As such, the Sweet Tea line won’t clog pores. It’s made in North America (Toronto). It’s hypoallergenic, paraben-free and isn’t tested on animals. It also won’t break the bank. “It’s affordable for the college student [and has] college-student values.”

Her mother, watching her daughter interact with the crowd of people, can’t stop smiling.

“I knew this was her dream,” says Tiffany Polk. “I’ve always taught her to help others. This is her way of doing that.”

Bass still has self-doubt. She worries that her makeup won’t sell, that she won’t recoup her investment, that she will fail. The store, however, reminds her of where she’s been — overwhelmed, full of doubt, sitting at a folding table.

“So people did make fun of the cardboard light,” Bass says. “But it’s all about humbling yourself and continuing the work regardless of what you have. That’s what this store means to me.”

See a video of Bass’ work and learn more about the Student Entrepreneurship Program through Student Affairs’ story at https://studentaffairs.missouri.edu/news/sweet-satisfaction/
I realized that I liked girls when I was in seventh grade when I came to the conclusion that I liked my best friend, who happened to be a girl. It made sense as I looked at the bigger picture—we spent almost every weekend at her house and I would always sleep over. We did almost everything together.

After coming to this realization though, I began to worry what my peers and my family members would think and especially what my best friend at the time would think.

Over time, I admitted to my family that I liked girls and boys, but they either saw me as lesbian or straight, depending on who I was dating at the time. Bisexuality doesn’t exist in their eyes, which was and still is troubling, but I know who I am attracted to and I don’t need a label to show that.

Tate*, one of my best friends, is gay and transgender. I knew both of these and never batted an eye. I have known him for nearly all of my life and his identity never changed who he is as a person. He first confided in me around freshman year of high school that he wasn’t comfortable identifying with the sex that he was given at birth, something that I could somewhat notice in certain conversations that we had in the past.

His confession did not make me feel different towards him. Just like Tate’s other friends, I worked to better educate myself on what it means to identify as transgender, what the community is like and what the process of transitioning is like.

“My friends are respecting and accepting, they have all been through it with me,” Tate said. “My close friends know my process and consider me as a male in general, they correct a lot of people for me when they get my pronouns wrong because sometimes I am unable to correct other people.”

We’ve gone through many hard times together. Some of which included figuring out who he now was, with his new name and pronouns, to the lighter side of things such as us going to our first Pride together.

He is my best friend and I have been able to see him blossom into the man that I always knew he could be. It has not always been easy for him, but he has always been open and honest with his family and friends. It is hurtful, it is traumatizing and they will open up about it when the time is right.

His confession did not make me feel different towards him. He is my best friend and I have been able to see him blossom into the man that I always knew he could be. It has not always been easy for him, but he has always been open and honest with his family and friends. It is hurtful, it is traumatizing and they will open up about it when the time is right.

He is my best friend and I have been able to see him blossom into the man that I always knew he could be. It has not always been easy for him, but he has always been open and honest with his family and friends. It is hurtful, it is traumatizing and they will open up about it when the time is right.

He is my best friend and I have been able to see him blossom into the man that I always knew he could be. It has not always been easy for him, but he has always been open and honest with his family and friends. It is hurtful, it is traumatizing and they will open up about it when the time is right.

He is my best friend and I have been able to see him blossom into the man that I always knew he could be. It has not always been easy for him, but he has always been open and honest with his family and friends. It is hurtful, it is traumatizing and they will open up about it when the time is right.

He is my best friend and I have been able to see him blossom into the man that I always knew he could be. It has not always been easy for him, but he has always been open and honest with his family and friends. It is hurtful, it is traumatizing and they will open up about it when the time is right.

He is my best friend and I have been able to see him blossom into the man that I always knew he could be. It has not always been easy for him, but he has always been open and honest with his family and friends. It is hurtful, it is traumatizing and they will open up about it when the time is right.

He is my best friend and I have been able to see him blossom into the man that I always knew he could be. It has not always been easy for him, but he has always been open and honest with his family and friends. It is hurtful, it is traumatizing and they will open up about it when the time is right.

He is my best friend and I have been able to see him blossom into the man that I always knew he could be. It has not always been easy for him, but he has always been open and honest with his family and friends. It is hurtful, it is traumatizing and they will open up about it when the time is right.

He is my best friend and I have been able to see him blossom into the man that I always knew he could be. It has not always been easy for him, but he has always been open and honest with his family and friends. It is hurtful, it is traumatizing and they will open up about it when the time is right.

He is my best friend and I have been able to see him blossom into the man that I always knew he could be. It has not always been easy for him, but he has always been open and honest with his family and friends. It is hurtful, it is traumatizing and they will open up about it when the time is right.

He is my best friend and I have been able to see him blossom into the man that I always knew he could be. It has not always been easy for him, but he has always been open and honest with his family and friends. It is hurtful, it is traumatizing and they will open up about it when the time is right.

He is my best friend and I have been able to see him blossom into the man that I always knew he could be. It has not always been easy for him, but he has always been open and honest with his family and friends. It is hurtful, it is traumatizing and they will open up about it when the time is right.
AWARDS RECOGNIZE
DISABILITY INCLUSION

Presented by CHANCELLOR'S COMMITTEE ON PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES

The Lee Henson Access Mizzou Award was created in honor of Mizzou’s former ADA Coordinator, Lee Henson, who died in 2014 after 20 years of service to the university. This award honors those who have:

◆ Responded above and beyond to a particular disability inclusion or accessibility concern or need on campus;
◆ Championed universal design to make Mizzou a more inclusive place for people with disabilities; and/or
◆ Demonstrated and modeled a commitment over time to improving the inclusion of people with disabilities or the accessibility of Mizzou’s campus and programs.

THE LEE HENSON AWARDS OCCUR EVERY YEAR DURING CELEBRATE ABILITY WEEK. MEET THE NOMINATIONS OF THIS YEAR’S FIVE RECIPIENTS.

STUDENT: MEGAN STOBER

Nomination from Alexis Cettina and Ellie Stitzer

Through both her organizations and her own personal drive, Megan Stober is a champion of making Mizzou a more inclusive place for people with disabilities.

In December 2016, Megan was diagnosed with bilateral lymphedema, a rare disease caused by a lymphatic system blockage that results in swelling in an arm or leg. In response to the swelling, Megan has to wear compression socks — not the most stylish garment, but one Megan has rocked fearlessly since her diagnosis.

She accepts stares and, in fact, does not see them as a problem. Megan advocates that these stares help people learn about her disability, broadening their horizons. Telling people not to stare creates more stigma around disability. She has taken this motto to a whole other level, writing about what she calls her “lymph life” on a blog she shares publicly, in hopes she “can provide insight and guidance for anyone working through a lymphedema diagnosis” (quote via her blog). And Megan has done just that and more.

Her openness about her disability impacted even more lives that she would have ever imagined when KOMU told her story this past summer.

Additionally, Megan has been involved in Greek life at Mizzou since her freshman year, and she noticed the need for major improvements regarding accessibility within the Greek community. As a result, Megan began brainstorming ways she could make a difference, herself. After lots of planning, she proposed that Mizzou’s PanHellenic Association (PHA) form an Accessibility Committee.

Her proposal was approved early Spring 2018, so she immediately began encouraging people both inside and outside of the Greek community to join. She received an overwhelming number of applications, and selected a great group of individuals to make a difference under her leadership. Even though the 2018-19 school year hasn’t started, Megan has been working with her committee tirelessly over the summer to prepare for formal recruitment this fall.

In addition to her successful reporting in the Convergence area in the Missouri School of Journalism and her work at KBB/A-FM and her newly-assumed leadership role on the executive board of Mizzou Women in Media, Madi has written a series of essays for Teen Vogue shining a light on the importance of universal design. The most recent was a hot take on the recent cause celebre of plastic straw bans. Madi’s essay went into great detail as to why many people (herself included) NEED straws to receive nourishment, and to enact blanket bans excludes and dehumanizes them.

Madi has used her skills as a journalist — sharpened and honed on our campus — to raise awareness about the needs of people with disabilities. The Teen Vogue piece was raw. It was deep. It was a teaching moment again and again and again as it went viral on social media.

As I posted when I shared it, “there hasn’t been a day since I’ve met her that I wasn’t proud to know Madison Lawson. My personal take: It’s a reminder that it’s not about you. Worried about what single-use straws are doing to the environment, fine don’t take one. But it’s not about you. Some people NEED those straws. Don’t believe me? Hear it for yourself from Madi. Because you know what? It’s not about you. Well unless you’re someone who’s facing losing your ability to nourish because someone else outlawed straws, then it’s about you.”

We would like to see Madi honored with this award for the work she’s done as an advocate for herself and for the disability community — and how she carries out that work using the voice and skills she’s developed here on campus.

Lastly, Megan has been a member of Mizzou Unity Coalition (MUC) since Fall 2017. For the 2017-18 school year, Megan served as the club’s Public Relations Chair, where she had the crucial role of spreading the word of all of MUC’s events to both advocate for the importance of disability inclusion and promote social change on Mizzou’s campus.

Serving as the voice of the club, Megan went above and beyond in her role. She was not only an excellent advocate on campus, but a role model to other members of the organization. Megan welcomes every MUC members — both returning and new — individually to every meeting, and her warm, uplifting presence makes everyone feel heard.

For the 2018-19 school year, Megan is serving as the Programming Chair for MUC, a role she jumped right into before the school year even began as she began planning MUC’s first-ever Welcome Week event as well as events for Celebrate Ability Week. Megan’s enthusiasm and determination to make the world a more inclusive place for those with all abilities has pro-actively addressed concerns on Mizzou’s campus and beyond, and we have no doubt Megan will continue to make a difference in years to come.
Sarah Edwards, in her role as the Coordinator for Mizzou Alternative Breaks (MAB), has made and continues to make a positive impact for students with disabilities at MU. MAB is known for its powerful commitment to service and leadership. It is also recognized as one of the largest alternative break programs in the nation.

Over the years, though, a significant challenge has been to ensure that the programs and trips are designed, marketed, and advertised as accessible to students with disabilities. Transportation, program sites, and the application process: all of these features lacked accessibility when the program first began. I have heard too many stories of disabled students who said they wished they could have participated, but couldn’t see how it would work, for reasons related to one or all of the features listed above.

Over the past couple of years, though, Sarah has been diligently, quietly working toward improved access. Her thoughtful consideration of options, and in reaching out to those of us in the Disability Center, the Office of Accessibility and ADA, and to students themselves has paid dividends. She listens carefully, and incorporates suggestions effectively.

Through her efforts, the application process, and the methods by which students are assigned to site visits now consider applicants with disabilities and allow for accommodation. Trips are being designed that are fully accessible and are advertised as such. Community partners — those who are at the sites visited — are being encouraged to provide housing options that are accessible.

A “Commitment to Accessibility” statement is now prominent on the Mizzou Alternative Breaks website. And Sarah has advocated for, and may soon have accessible transportation available for trips on short notice. I respectfully urge the committee’s sincere consideration of Sarah as a recipient of the Lee Henson Access Mizzou Award. Her modest efforts over the past couple of years exemplify a true commitment to access and inclusion and she should be recognized for them. Thank you.

Phil Silverman has had the responsibility for dealing with thousands of students for over 15 years here as the lab coordinator for the undergraduate chemistry laboratories and an instructor of a number of undergraduate chemistry classes (with the exception of when he taught at the US Naval Academy for an active duty rotation).

In my mind, Phil has gone above and beyond helping a student succeed no matter what the need a student might have. I knew the impact Phil made in two specific cases and I asked them to comment for this nomination.

One student, who was severely injured in a car accident resulting in having a full arm cast, writes: “He was very accommodating for me and paired me up with a partner that was ok with being a scribe for me. So I did all of my pre- and post-lab work with my partner, and the partner would submit the paper with both of our names. Even once the cast was removed, he didn’t want me to overwork my wrist, so he allowed me to do that for the remainder of the semester. He also made himself very available for office hours if I had any extra needs due to my limitations with writing. I went in a few times for help on a few topics and he was always very nice and concerned with how my wrist was doing. I’m very appreciative of his help that semester.”

Another student writes: “When I took Dr. Silverman’s lab (the organic chemistry lab) he met with my lab assistant one on one to prepare them for working in the lab, since my lab assistant had never worked in a chemistry lab before. That really was helpful for my assistant because he had expressed to me before that he was a little nervous to use chemicals and lab tools, especially since he only assisted me in the lab, not lecture, and therefore was unfamiliar with a lot of the concepts.”

In general, Phil has traditionally allowed students to take exams here in the Chemistry Department which permits him to check in on the student. In addition, this decreases the need for the Disability Center to provide space for these students.

A student writes about Phil: “He just tried to make it as easy and efficient as possible while still meeting my access needs.”

Phil literally has an “open-door” policy - that is, his door is always open and students drop in all the time: for assistance, for a snack, for coffee. He is ready to help whatever the need. I know on two specific cases he physically walked students over to the RSVP Center or to the Student Health Center or Counseling Center.

It is my opinion that Mr. Phil Silverman embodies the spirit of Lee Henson every day to make Mizzou a more inclusive place for ALL. But, don’t take my word for it, take the word of just a few of the students he has helped.
LAWSON TURNS LIFE EXPERIENCE WITH DISABILITY INTO PODCAST

Story by CLAIRE COLBY
Photos by N. ANDREW DENT III

“People just think they can ask questions or that because I’m sitting down, I’m so different,” she said. “I’m just a person sitting down — you sit down too, sometimes.”

Lawson channeled those frustrations into her new podcast. “It just seemed obvious that the answer was to document those feelings so that they were less exhausting,” she said. “Now I can just say listen to my podcast.”

Her podcast, which was released Sept. 17, was the result of an idea that a journalism student for a school project, the story about a girl in a wheelchair on (The Suite Life of) Zack and Cody or a girl in a wheelchair on (Degrassi) "The Obvious Question” is available on iTunes and KBIA.org.

“Right now, I’m talking to a girl from the U.K.,” she said. “I had a tremendous sense of pride for my friend,” she said. Heigl fiercely advocates for her younger sister, who has Down syndrome, and said she bonded with Lawson over a mutual “righteous anger” about the state of disability rights. “Her podcast is a platform for humanizing the disability community,” she said.

Lawson considered herself an activist for disability rights and had written on the subject for publications like Teen Vogue and Glamour. Plans are already in the works for a second season of the show, she said. “When I was a little kid, I always wanted to see somebody in the media or on a television show — it would be so dope if I saw a girl in a wheelchair on (The Suite Life of) Zack and Cody or something like that,” Lawson said.

The Disability Center works to provide assistance with transportation, housing and academics to make MU accessible for all students. “I think it’s really important for people to see that disabilities really don’t hold most people back,” Hammer said.  

Make-up artist and actor Sandra Bullock saw a graphic about the show on Instagram in which one of the show’s characters said, “When I was a little kid, I always wanted to see somebody in the media or on a television show — it would be so dope if I saw a girl in a wheelchair on (The Suite Life of) Zack and Cody or something like that,” said Lawson.

Lawson, confused, asked for clarification. “I’m supposed to ask you the obvious question,” the reporter said. “You’re a girl in a wheelchair on a show,” Lawson said. “I wasn’t angered by the question. She’s been asked jarring questions most of her life because she has two rare forms of muscular dystrophy — spinal muscle atrophy and collagen E — and uses a motorized wheelchair to get around. But that conversation inspired the name for Lawson’s KBIA-produced podcast: “The Obvious Question.” It’s about correcting misconceptions about people with disabilities.

The comments that have resonated most with me are definitely comments that I’ve gotten from other people within the disability community,” she said.

People have contacted her from around the world. “Right now, I’m talking to a girl from the UK,” she said. “When she listened to the podcast, she just felt like it was the first time that someone really understood what she was going through.”

Lillie Heigl, who graduated from MU this spring, met Lawson last year after using her position on the executive board of Mizzou Alternative Breaks to coordinate an accessible service trip. Heigl fervently advocates for her younger sister, who has Down syndrome, and said she bonded with Lawson over a mutual “righteous anger” about the state of disability rights. “Her podcast is a platform for humanizing the disability experience,” Heigl said.

Heigl quickly listened to all the episodes of the new show. “I had a tremendous sense of pride for my friend,” she said.

Barbara Hammer, director of MU’s Disability Center, praised the show for its positive representation of people with disabilities. “I think what Madi is doing with this podcast is great for the disability community,” she said.

“I think what Madi is doing with this podcast is great for the disability community,” she said. “Right now, I’m talking to a girl from the U.K.,” she said. “When she listened to the podcast, she just felt like it was the first time that someone really understood what she was going through.”

Lillie Heigl, who graduated from MU this spring, met Lawson last year after using her position on the executive board of Mizzou Alternative Breaks to coordinate an accessible service trip. Heigl fervently advocates for her younger sister, who has Down syndrome, and said she bonded with Lawson over a mutual “righteous anger” about the state of disability rights. “Her podcast is a platform for humanizing the disability experience,” Heigl said.

Heigl quickly listened to all the episodes of the new show. “I had a tremendous sense of pride for my friend,” she said.

Barbara Hammer, director of MU’s Disability Center, praised the show for its positive representation of people with disabilities. “I think what Madi is doing with this podcast is great for showing what life is like for people with disabilities and clearing misconceptions,” Hammer said. “She’s doing it in a very compelling and creative way.”

“People just think they can ask questions or that because I’m sitting down, I’m so different,” she said. “I’m just a person sitting down — you sit down too, sometimes.”

Lawson channeled those frustrations into her new podcast. “It just seemed obvious that the answer was to document those feelings so that they were less exhausting,” she said. “Now I can just say listen to my podcast.”

Her podcast, which was released Sept. 17, was the result of an idea that a journalism student for a school project, the story about a girl in a wheelchair on (The Suite Life of) Zack and Cody or something like that,” said Lawson.

“When I was a little kid, I always wanted to see somebody in the media or on a television show — it would be so dope if I saw a girl in a wheelchair on (The Suite Life of) Zack and Cody or something like that,” Lawson said.

“Being a — pun intended — roll model for these people has just been so cool. I never saw myself being that, but now that I can, it’s like being able to look back at my old self and say, ‘Hey, there are going to be people who look like you out there, and it’s going to be OK.’”

Story originally published in the Columbia Missourian.
Diversity and inclusivity make for more representative anti-sexual assault movements.

Column by Abigail Ruhman

Abigail Ruhman is a freshman journalism and political science major at MU. She is an opinion columnist who writes about student life, politics and social issues for The Maneater.

Women are at their most vulnerable when they need support. It’s as simple as that. The simple sentiment of “me too” and “why didn’t I report” is a show of support. It has built a network that allows individuals to feel safe in coming forward about their own sexual assault.

In a world where rape culture and toxic masculinity thrive on each other, it can be difficult for society to break through the generalization of rape victims. The benefit of the #MeToo and #WhyIDidntReport movements is that they do not play into the generalizations.

Sexual assault can happen to anyone, and no one has the right to dictate who belongs in each major movement.

Most people would never think of a former NFL athlete as the kind of person to use the #MeToo movement, but Terry Crews didn’t let that stop him from coming forward with his experience with sexual assault. It was the Harvey Weinstein scandal that caused him to come forward. He explained how the scandal brought back memories of his experience, according to The Guardian.

One out of three women experienced some form of contact sexual violence, according to a 2010-2012 CDC study. While men experience this at half the rate (one out of six men experienced some form of contact sexual violence) the issue is still very much a problem.

The National Intimate Partner and Sexual Violence Survey. The rates were also higher for lesbian women and gay men.

In addition, a major problem that the queer and gender non-conforming community has encountered is the issue of “corrective rape.” As an extreme form of conversion therapy, corrective rape is the sexual assault of a gender and/or sexual minority for the purpose of showing them that their identity is wrong. As if that sexual encounter would convince someone that they were not sexaul, bisexual, transgender, or genderfluid. Sexual assault has become a tool that people use to gain power over others.

Individuals with disabilities are also more likely to experience sexual assault, according to NPR. Disabled individuals are seven times more likely to be sexually assaulted that those without a disability. Finding support with the #MeToo movement could help find justice for these minority groups.

With the recent Supreme Court nomination hearing of Brett Kavanaugh bringing sexual assault back into the spotlight, it can be easy to forget why these movements need to be inclusive.

If the movements fail to include everyone harmed by rape culture, then they will fail to create some form of change.

The reason that the #MeToo and #WhyIDidntReport movements are so amazing is that they naturally include everyone. This makes them especially powerful because now they are able to assist those outside the generalizations of a rape victim. This isn’t just an issue for cisgender, straight and white able-bodied women (although they are still a part of the discussion). This is an issue for everyone.

Alienating those who relate to these experiences just because they may be different only cultivates a society of silence. When people within these movements ignore intersectional individuals or those who fail to comply with the typical narrative, they only serve to hurt those suffering from the same experiences.

A movement is only as strong as its people. Diversity helps to strengthen these groups. When someone is at their most vulnerable, sometimes all they need is to know that they have support, even if it’s as simple as saying “me too.”
Tojan Rahhal did tremendous work as Mizzou Engineering's Director of Diversity and Outreach Initiatives. And she’ll be working to further those efforts as the College’s new Assistant Dean for Inclusive Excellence and Strategic Initiatives.

Rahhal has led the College’s efforts to strategically improve its diversity and outreach efforts since coming to MU in January 2017. She drove the creation of the College’s Inclusivity Center and its robust program offerings and spearheaded the wildly successful STEM Cubs camps and annual Diverse Engineering Advocates (NAMEPA), and, most recently, won an INSIGHT into Diversity Inspiring Programs Award for the STEM Cubs program.

Rahhal has led the College’s efforts to strategically improve its diversity and outreach efforts since coming to MU in January 2017. She drove the creation of the College’s Inclusivity Center and its robust program offerings and spearheaded the wildly successful STEM Cubs camps and annual Diverse Engineering Advocates (NAMEPA), and, most recently, won an INSIGHT into Diversity Inspiring Programs Award for the STEM Cubs program.

Since joining Mizzou, her work has earned her several awards. Rahhal was recently recognized as a National Association of Multicultural Engineering Program Advocates (NAMEPA) Woman of Color History Maker in Diversity for her leadership in efforts to “catalyze change to help [engineering] students from underrepresented populations overcome historic barriers”. Rahhal was chosen for the Shirley Chisholm Outspoken Advocate Award, and two Mizzou Engineering Outstanding Staff Awards — one from the College and one voted on by Mizzou Engineering Student Council.

She was recently named Strategic Direction Chair for the National Association of Multicultural Engineering Program Advocates (NAMEPA), and, most recently, won an INSIGHT into DIVERSITY Inspiring Programs Award for the STEM Cubs program.

She said she runs to prevent burnout. She also said that she has 13 calendars in order to stay organized. These calendars range from her work life to her daughter and husband’s schedules.

Rahhal earned her bachelor’s degree in biomedical engineering from North Carolina State and her Ph.D. in pharmaceutical sciences from the University of North Carolina.

In her new role, she will execute the College’s vision to build and sustain a diverse and inclusive environment by developing, implementing and continually assessing strategies and programs to enhance the College’s environment. Her goal is to foster and sustain a diverse and inclusive environment by developing, implementing and continually assessing strategies and programs to enhance the College’s environment. Her goal is to foster and nurture a learning and working environment that advances inclusive excellence among the Mizzou Engineering community and campus. In addition, Rahhal will serve as an advisor to the College’s strategic initiatives including college culture, student recruitment and retention, and educating engineering leaders.

“I am excited to take on this new role and continue working with our wonderful students and amazing faculty and staff. In this past year alone, I have seen the change we are capable of and look forward to becoming a model for inclusive excellence in engineering,” Rahhal said.

Rahhal’s work has earned her numerous awards, including the Shirley Chisholm Outspoken Advocate Award and the Mizzou Engineering Outstanding Staff Awards. She was also named the Shirley Chisholm Outspoken Advocate Award for her efforts to “catalyze change to help engineering students from underrepresented populations overcome historic barriers.”

Rahhal earned her bachelor’s degree in biomedical engineering from North Carolina State and her Ph.D. in pharmaceutical sciences from the University of North Carolina. Since joining Mizzou, her work has earned her several awards. Rahhal was recently named Strategic Direction Chair for the National Association of Multicultural Engineering Program Advocates (NAMEPA), and has been recognized as an INSIGHT into DIVERSITY Inspiring Programs Award for the STEM Cubs program.

The College of Engineering Dean Elizabeth Loboa said she was recently named Strategic Direction Chair for the National Association of Multicultural Engineering Program Advocates (NAMEPA), and has been recognized as an INSIGHT into DIVERSITY Inspiring Programs Award for the STEM Cubs program.

The College of Engineering Dean Elizabeth Loboa said she was recently named Strategic Direction Chair for the National Association of Multicultural Engineering Program Advocates (NAMEPA), and has been recognized as an INSIGHT into DIVERSITY Inspiring Programs Award for the STEM Cubs program.

Loboa stressed the importance of having a support system or mentor. “The College of Engineering Dean Elizabeth Loboa said she was recently named Strategic Direction Chair for the National Association of Multicultural Engineering Program Advocates (NAMEPA), and has been recognized as an INSIGHT into DIVERSITY Inspiring Programs Award for the STEM Cubs program.

Women in engineering rally to extinguish burnout.

How can women minimize stress and avoid burnout in the workplace? Keeping multiple calendars, traveling and separating work from your personal life are all ways to keep stress at bay, according to five panelists at a College of Engineering event.

The To Avoid Burnout panel was hosted as part of Women in Engineering week. Several engineers, including College of Engineering Dean Elizabeth Loboa, spoke about their personal experiences with juggling a work-life balance and how they de-stress.

Burnout is a prominent issue for women in the workplace, according to an announcement for the event by the Office of Diversity and Outreach Initiatives. “Women report having significant levels of anxiety and stress caused by their work, as well as stemming from a lack of motivation and inability to progress.”

The panelists spoke on the importance of taking care of one’s mental health and how to set boundaries when it comes to the workplace. Each panelist had different ways in which they handle stress that comes with being a woman in engineering and, for some, being a mother.

Heather Hunt, a biological engineering professor at MU, said she runs to prevent burnout. Mosnick also discussed the importance of taking care of one’s mental health. She recalled how stressed she was in school versus now that she’s in her career.

“A lot of times, burnout occurs because your expectations have changed,” she said. “I think that taking that time for mental wellness helps you to evaluate those expectations and evaluate where you are in your life.”

The panelists encouraged students to push themselves and to analyze a situation before acting. There will be different outcomes depending on how they approach a situation, they said, so it is up to that person to figure out what works and what doesn’t.

Loboa stressed the importance of having a support system or mentor. “The College of Engineering Dean Elizabeth Loboa said she was recently named Strategic Direction Chair for the National Association of Multicultural Engineering Program Advocates (NAMEPA), and has been recognized as an INSIGHT into DIVERSITY Inspiring Programs Award for the STEM Cubs program.

Story by CHRISTIANE-TRESOR CRAWFORD

Women in engineering rally to extinguish burnout.

She stressed the importance of keeping family time sacred and to do what you love and what you need to be happy. “We are all different in terms of what makes us happy,” said Noor Azizan-Gardner, who has advocated for diversity and inclusion on campus, at the panel.

Christina Mosnick, a recent graduate of MU and an Esri software developer, has a different approach. Her stress reliever is to take flight, and she enjoys international travel.

“I am very good at leaving work at work,” she said.

Mosnick also discussed the importance of taking care of one’s mental health. She recalled how stressed she was in school versus now that she’s in her career.

“Women in engineering rally to extinguish burnout.”

The panelists spoke on the importance of taking care of one’s mental health and how to set boundaries when it comes to the workplace. Each panelist had different ways in which they handle stress that comes with being a woman in engineering and, for some, being a mother.

Heather Hunt, a biological engineering professor at MU, said she runs to prevent burnout. She also said that she has 13 calendars in order to stay organized. These calendars range from her work life to her daughter and husband’s schedules.

College of Engineering Dean Elizabeth Loboa said she separates her work and private life. She keeps her work life organized, but she plans nothing when it comes to her personal life because she said that it is important to “enjoy...the moment.”

She stressed the importance of keeping family time sacred and to do what you love and what you need to be happy. “We are all different in terms of what makes us happy,” said Noor Azizan-Gardner, who has advocated for diversity and inclusion on campus, at the panel.

Christina Mosnick, a recent graduate of MU and an Esri software developer, has a different approach. Her stress reliever is to take flight, and she enjoys international travel.

“I am very good at leaving work at work,” she said.

Mosnick also discussed the importance of taking care of one’s mental health. She recalled how stressed she was in school versus now that she’s in her career.

“A lot of times, burnout occurs because your expectations have changed,” she said. “I think that taking that time for mental wellness helps you to evaluate those expectations and evaluate where you are in your life.”

The panelists encouraged students to push themselves and to analyze a situation before acting. There will be different outcomes depending on how they approach a situation, they said, so it is up to that person to figure out what works and what doesn’t.

Loboa stressed the importance of having a support system or mentor. “The College of Engineering Dean Elizabeth Loboa said she was recently named Strategic Direction Chair for the National Association of Multicultural Engineering Program Advocates (NAMEPA), and has been recognized as an INSIGHT into DIVERSITY Inspiring Programs Award for the STEM Cubs program.

Story originally appeared in the Columbia Missourian
Ruby Bailey brings a rare set of skills and experience that make her the ideal next leader of the Columbia Missourian,” said David Kurpius, dean of the school and publisher of the Missourian. “She cares deeply about connecting with communities, telling important stories and doing so in a way that keeps pace with the constant state of change in journalism today.”

Bailey, 51, earned a bachelor’s degree from Wayne State University in 1989 and worked for the Flint Journal in Flint, Mich., for three years before joining the Detroit News. In 1992, she joined the staff of the Detroit Free Press, where she worked for 16 years. There she was a business and enterprise reporter and became a Washington correspondent, where she covered news of interest to Michigan readers. She also covered the 9/11 attacks, and was embedded with the U.S. Navy in 2003 for three months covering Operation Iraqi Freedom. She later became an assistant metro reporter in Detroit focused on improving the newspaper’s online edition. In 2014 she joined the Sacramento Bee, where she led a team of reporters focused on increasing and improving the Bee’s digital content. She has experience covering and editing all aspects of local news, including business, entertainment and feature coverage.

Bailey replaces Mike Jenner, who has served as interim executive editor since January 2017. Jenner will return to his role on the journalism school faculty as the Houston Harte Endowed Chair. Jenner said, “The Missourian is the nation’s most important collegiate laboratory for daily journalism. It is also Columbia’s voice and heartbeat at the connection between university and community.”

“Ruby Bailey is the bold, innovative and experienced leader this community newspaper needs. She is a reporter and community in Columbia and the journalism community in the state.”

Major Garrett, Chief White House Correspondent for CBS News, is the president of the Missourian Publishing Association, the non-profit Missourian’s governing board. Garrett said, “The Missourian is the nation’s most important collegiate laboratory for daily journalism. It is also Columbia’s voice and heartbeat at the connection between university and community.”

“Ruby Bailey is the bold, innovative and experienced leader this community newspaper needs. She is a reporter and newroom leader who excelled as technology changed and economic challenges multiplied. That is not easy,” Garrett said.

“Ruby brings a lot of outstanding editorial skills. She’s also skilled in new approaches in digital media. She’s very enthusiastic,” he said.

“This experience and Bailey’s boundless enthusiasm will give the Missourian a knowing voice and vision for the future. On behalf of the board of the Missouri Publishing Association, I enthusiastically welcome Bailey to the Missourian and say, ‘This treasure is yours and you have our full confidence and respect.’”

Kurpius said, “This mission has always been to serve the readers. Whether interviewing a beat cop or the President of the United States, I was working to serve the readers,” she said. “When you come to Columbia with that kind of background, Columbia becomes home and its concerns are my concerns. Its successes and challenges are mine.”

“My mission has always been to serve the readers. Whether interviewing a beat cop or the President of the United States, I was working to serve the readers,” she said. “When you come to Columbia with that kind of background, Columbia becomes home and its concerns are my concerns. Its successes and challenges are mine.”
The Clothesline Project began in 1990 in Hyannis, Massachusetts, as a way for victims and survivors to speak out against interpersonal violence. People are invited to decorate T-shirts with their stories to then hang on a clothesline as their testimony to others. STARS (Stronger Together Against Relationship and Sexual Violence), a student org based out of the Relationship and Sexual Violence Prevention (RSVP) Center organized Mizzou’s event.

“The event went really well! I was glad to explain to people what the Clothesline Project is and how it helps survivors process their trauma,” said Christian Cmehil-Warn, a member of STARS who tabled at the event. “I think it is really important to remind people of the human element, that survivors aren’t just statistics, that they are people with thoughts and feelings as well.”

The project started out as an educational and healing tool focused on violence against women and was motivated by a statistic reported by the Men’s Rape Prevention Project in Washington D.C. According to the statistics, 56,000 soldiers died in Vietnam, and during the same time period, 51,000 women were killed as a result of interpersonal violence.

A small group of women mobilized by that and their own experiences wanted to find a way to make these statistics both provocative healing and educational tools. Visual artist Rachel Carey-Harper suggested hanging T-shirts decorated with the stories of survivors, victims and their supporters. The idea of the clothesline was seen as natural because laundry was considered “women’s work” and women often exchanged ideas and stories over backyard fences while hanging their laundry out to dry.

In October of 1990, the first Clothesline Project occurred. There were 31 shirts on display, and it coincided with the annual event “Take Back the Night.” The project has grown exponentially and currently has about 500 events in 41 states and five countries. More than 50,000 shirts are created.

**THE PURPOSE OF THE PROJECT IS FOUR-FOLD:**

- To bear witness to the survivors and victims of interpersonal violence.
- To help with the healing process for people who have lost a loved one or who are survivors of this violence.
- To educate, document and raise society’s awareness of the extent of interpersonal violence.
- To provide a nationwide network of support, encouragement, and information for other communities starting their own Clothesline Projects.
The Maneater

Story by SARAH SABATKE

That’s how many lives on average are lost to suicide in the United States each day, according to the American Foundation for Suicide Prevention. MU student Zach Lahr and members of the Mizzou Student Suicide Prevention Coalition (MSSPC) are working to prevent that statistic from claiming lives on campus. Lahr, a senior from Lindenhurst, Illinois, studying human development and family science, says his primary goal as president of MSSPC is to improve inclusion within the organization and strengthen partnerships across campus.

“Mental health has no boundaries in terms of race, gender, organization and strengthen partnerships across campus. “Mental health has no boundaries in terms of race, gender, etc.,” he says. “Everyone is affected by it, and it is crucial to understand that what you’re going through, whether it is stress, depression, PTSD, grief and so much more,” he said. “You do not have to be mentally ill to see a mental health professional, either.”

It can also be difficult to watch a friend face a challenge and not know how to help them. The online University of Missouri suicide prevention training program, helps prepare students, faculty and staff to recognize and respond to individuals who might be suicidal.

Lahr encourages students to connect friends in need of support to mental health professionals on campus and within the community. MU student fees cover several appointments at the Counseling Center and Student Health Center. Counselors are trained to provide mental health services in a brief therapy model.

Those folks are dedicated to helping people process and understand what they are going through, whether it is stress, depression, PTSD, grief and so much more,” he said. “You do not have to be mentally ill to see a mental health professional, either.”

“Mental health issues can make someone genuinely feel crazy, listen to them. Most importantly, if someone approaches you for support, listen to them.

“It is alright to ask the difficult questions... it shows that you care.”

Students and individuals concerned about an MU student can call 573-882-6601 to speak to a counselor 24/7. The National Suicide Prevention Lifeline is available at 1-800-273-8255. Text “Home” to 741741 to be connected to the Crisis Text Line.

Visit wellbeing.missouri.edu to learn more.

The Walker covered a variety of topics such as the legal repercussions, emotional impact and frustrating bureaucratic process assault victims experience. One station in the activity exposed participants to rape kits doctors use on victims to garner evidence. Some steps include plucking head and pubic hair, fingernail scrapings and swabbing various body parts for bodily fluids like blood, semen and saliva.

“Those folks are dedicated to helping people process and understand what they are going through, whether it is stress, depression, PTSD, grief and so much more,” he said. “You do not have to be mentally ill to see a mental health professional, either.”

“Mental health issues can make someone genuinely feel crazy, listen to them. Most importantly, if someone approaches you for support, listen to them.

“It is alright to ask the difficult questions... it shows that you care.”

Students and individuals concerned about an MU student can call 573-882-6601 to speak to a counselor 24/7. The National Suicide Prevention Lifeline is available at 1-800-273-8255. Text “Home” to 741741 to be connected to the Crisis Text Line.

Visit wellbeing.missouri.edu to learn more.

Walk the Walk covered a variety of topics such as the legal repercussions, emotional impact and frustrating bureaucratic process assault victims experience. One station in the activity exposed participants to rape kits doctors use on victims to garner evidence. Some steps include plucking head and pubic hair, fingernail scrapings and swabbing various body parts for bodily fluids like blood, semen and saliva.

“Those folks are dedicated to helping people process and understand what they are going through, whether it is stress, depression, PTSD, grief and so much more,” he said. “You do not have to be mentally ill to see a mental health professional, either.”

“Mental health issues can make someone genuinely feel crazy, listen to them. Most importantly, if someone approaches you for support, listen to them.

“It is alright to ask the difficult questions... it shows that you care.”

Students and individuals concerned about an MU student can call 573-882-6601 to speak to a counselor 24/7. The National Suicide Prevention Lifeline is available at 1-800-273-8255. Text “Home” to 741741 to be connected to the Crisis Text Line.

Visit wellbeing.missouri.edu to learn more.

Walk the Walk covered a variety of topics such as the legal repercussions, emotional impact and frustrating bureaucratic process assault victims experience. One station in the activity exposed participants to rape kits doctors use on victims to garner evidence. Some steps include plucking head and pubic hair, fingernail scrapings and swabbing various body parts for bodily fluids like blood, semen and saliva.

“Those folks are dedicated to helping people process and understand what they are going through, whether it is stress, depression, PTSD, grief and so much more,” he said. “You do not have to be mentally ill to see a mental health professional, either.”

“Mental health issues can make someone genuinely feel crazy, listen to them. Most importantly, if someone approaches you for support, listen to them.

“It is alright to ask the difficult questions... it shows that you care.”

Students and individuals concerned about an MU student can call 573-882-6601 to speak to a counselor 24/7. The National Suicide Prevention Lifeline is available at 1-800-273-8255. Text “Home” to 741741 to be connected to the Crisis Text Line.

Visit wellbeing.missouri.edu to learn more.
S

When future MU Police Lt. April Colbrecht arrived on MU’s campus in 1993, she parked illegally like any other lost and confused freshman. “I moved out by myself with everything in my car,” she said. “I had no idea what I was doing. All I knew was Jesse Hall had the big dome.” She had no clue that day she moved away from home in Imperial, Missouri, and into her dorm that she would never leave the university.

Colbrecht, 43, has served with MU Police for 20 years. She loves getting to know the community and mentoring students through her work, but parts of the job, like dealing with negative attitudes towards police, can be challenging. However, bearing witness to cases of sexual assault and helping students who are struggling with their mental health has been the hardest part of the job. As a victim of sexual assault herself, she can relate on a deep level.

Colbrecht was disinclined to speak about her accomplishments. But Kristen Temple, who worked in residential life at MU for 26 years, has known Colbrecht since she was a freshman living in Graham Hall. Temple, 54, doesn’t hesitate in calling Colbrecht a true servant who is passionate about knowing her community.

Temple often worked alongside Colbrecht when cases arose in residence halls. Temple admires Colbrecht’s ability to listen — something she views as a rare skill. Colbrecht makes everyone feel important, she said.

“She was one of those officers that I could always call and say, ‘There’s one room (with) a lot of people coming in and out...’” she said. “(Colbrecht) would do a ‘knock-and-talk’ and use that as an opportunity to develop a relationship and get to know that student.”

Temple recalled an evening in the late ’90s where a student told her she’d been sexually assaulted. The student was deeply traumatized and didn’t want to talk. Temple knew exactly whom to call.

“When the student sat in front of April, (the student’s) body language went from being in knots to much more relaxed,” she said. “Even in that setting, in a sterile interview room, April was able to get that student to let her guard down.”

For Colbrecht, being such an invited officer can be exhausting. The expectation to solve issues quickly and move on can be difficult for her.

“It’s hard for me because I’m the type of personality that likes to be here all the time,” she said. “You want to follow up and do the best job for victims, but you have to be able to set boundaries of not doing work.”

Colbrecht communicates, with Officer Zachary Chinea about the detail of a case after the meeting. Colbrecht said she wants MU students to realize they can “come here for help.”

Colbrecht makes jokes during the meeting with police officers on the evening shift. She says she tries to interact with the community in a positive way to avoid the negative connotation sometimes associated with police officers. Photo by Di Pan.

Colbrecht makes everyone feel important, listen — something she views as a rare skill. Colbrecht communicates, with Officer Zachary Chinea about the detail of a case after the meeting. Colbrecht said she wants MU students to realize they can “come here for help.”

“I’ve been depressed before and it’s a heavy, heavy feeling,” she said. “To see someone else going through that is hard. You feel kind of helpless.”

One way she channels that experience is through her work as coordinator of MU Police’s Rape Aggression Defense program. The R.A.D. course aims to empower women to feel safer through self-defense and prevention strategies. This year, MU Police offered an additional session because so many women wanted to sign up — the result of rumors at the start of the semester about human trafficking in Columbia.

One of Colbrecht’s goals is to make people feel more capable and secure in themselves. For her, watching how strong women become throughout the course is gratifying.

She also sees herself as a mentor for college students who, away from home, begin to reckon with their sexual identity. A 2018 survey from the Human Rights Campaign found that 78 percent of LGBTQ teens have not come out to their parents because their parents have made negative comments about LGBTQ people. Colbrecht has been involved with MIZ-OUT, an organization on campus that supports people of gender and sexual minorities.

Colbrecht was disinclined to speak about her accomplishments. But Kristen Temple, who worked in residential life at MU for 26 years, has known Colbrecht since she was a freshman living in Graham Hall. Temple, 54, doesn’t hesitate in calling Colbrecht a true servant who is passionate about knowing her community.

Temple often worked alongside Colbrecht when cases arose in residence halls. Temple admires Colbrecht’s ability to listen — something she views as a rare skill. Colbrecht makes everyone feel important, she said.

“She was one of those officers that I could always call and say, ‘There’s one room (with) a lot of people coming in and out...’” she said. “(Colbrecht) would do a ‘knock-and-talk’ and use that as an opportunity to develop a relationship and get to know that student.”

Temple recalled an evening in the late ’90s where a student told her she’d been sexually assaulted. The student was deeply traumatized and didn’t want to talk. Temple knew exactly whom to call.

“When the student sat in front of April, (the student’s) body language went from being in knots to much more relaxed,” she said. “Even in that setting, in a sterile interview room, April was able to get that student to let her guard down.”

For Colbrecht, being such an invited officer can be exhausting. The expectation to solve issues quickly and move on can be difficult for her.

“It’s hard for me because I’m the type of personality that likes to be here all the time,” she said. “You want to follow up and do the best job for victims, but you have to be able to set boundaries of not doing work.”

Colbrecht communicates, with Officer Zachary Chinea about the detail of a case after the meeting. Colbrecht said she wants MU students to realize they can “come here for help.”

“I’ve been depressed before and it’s a heavy, heavy feeling,” she said. “To see someone else going through that is hard. You feel kind of helpless.”

One way she channels that experience is through her work as coordinator of MU Police’s Rape Aggression Defense program. The R.A.D. course aims to empower women to feel safer through self-defense and prevention strategies. This year, MU Police offered an additional session because so many women wanted to sign up — the result of rumors at the start of the semester about human trafficking in Columbia.

One of Colbrecht’s goals is to make people feel more capable and secure in themselves. For her, watching how strong women become throughout the course is gratifying.

She also sees herself as a mentor for college students who, away from home, begin to reckon with their sexual identity. A 2018 survey from the Human Rights Campaign found that 78 percent of LGBTQ teens have not come out to their parents because their parents have made negative comments about LGBTQ people. Colbrecht has been involved with MIZ-OUT, an organization on campus that supports people of gender and sexual minorities.

Colbrecht was disinclined to speak about her accomplishments. But Kristen Temple, who worked in residential life at MU for 26 years, has known Colbrecht since she was a freshman living in Graham Hall. Temple, 54, doesn’t hesitate in calling Colbrecht a true servant who is passionate about knowing her community.

Temple often worked alongside Colbrecht when cases arose in residence halls. Temple admires Colbrecht’s ability to listen — something she views as a rare skill. Colbrecht makes everyone feel important, she said.

“She was one of those officers that I could always call and say, ‘There’s one room (with) a lot of people coming in and out...’” she said. “(Colbrecht) would do a ‘knock-and-talk’ and use that as an opportunity to develop a relationship and get to know that student.”

Temple recalled an evening in the late ’90s where a student told her she’d been sexually assaulted. The student was deeply traumatized and didn’t want to talk. Temple knew exactly whom to call.

“When the student sat in front of April, (the student’s) body language went from being in knots to much more relaxed,” she said. “Even in that setting, in a sterile interview room, April was able to get that student to let her guard down.”

For Colbrecht, being such an invited officer can be exhausting. The expectation to solve issues quickly and move on can be difficult for her.

“It’s hard for me because I’m the type of personality that likes to be here all the time,” she said. “You want to follow up and do the best job for victims, but you have to be able to set boundaries of not doing work.”

Colbrecht communicates, with Officer Zachary Chinea about the detail of a case after the meeting. Colbrecht said she wants MU students to realize they can “come here for help.”

“I’ve been depressed before and it’s a heavy, heavy feeling,” she said. “To see someone else going through that is hard. You feel kind of helpless.”

One way she channels that experience is through her work as coordinator of MU Police’s Rape Aggression Defense program. The R.A.D. course aims to empower women to feel safer through self-defense and prevention strategies. This year, MU Police offered an additional session because so many women wanted to sign up — the result of rumors at the start of the semester about human trafficking in Columbia.

One of Colbrecht’s goals is to make people feel more capable and secure in themselves. For her, watching how strong women become throughout the course is gratifying.

She also sees herself as a mentor for college students who, away from home, begin to reckon with their sexual identity. A 2018 survey from the Human Rights Campaign found that 78 percent of LGBTQ teens have not come out to their parents because their parents have made negative comments about LGBTQ people. Colbrecht has been involved with MIZ-OUT, an organization on campus that supports people of gender and sexual minorities.

Colbrecht was disinclined to speak about her accomplishments. But Kristen Temple, who worked in residential life at MU for 26 years, has known Colbrecht since she was a freshman living in Graham Hall. Temple, 54, doesn’t hesitate in calling Colbrecht a true servant who is passionate about knowing her community.

Temple often worked alongside Colbrecht when cases arose in residence halls. Temple admires Colbrecht’s ability to listen — something she views as a rare skill. Colbrecht makes everyone feel important, she said.

“She was one of those officers that I could always call and say, ‘There’s one room (with) a lot of people coming in and out...’” she said. “(Colbrecht) would do a ‘knock-and-talk’ and use that as an opportunity to develop a relationship and get to know that student.”

Temple recalled an evening in the late ’90s where a student told her she’d been sexually assaulted. The student was deeply traumatized and didn’t want to talk. Temple knew exactly whom to call.

“When the student sat in front of April, (the student’s) body language went from being in knots to much more relaxed,” she said. “Even in that setting, in a sterile interview room, April was able to get that student to let her guard down.”

For Colbrecht, being such an invited officer can be exhausting. The expectation to solve issues quickly and move on can be difficult for her.

“It’s hard for me because I’m the type of personality that likes to be here all the time,” she said. “You want to follow up and do the best job for victims, but you have to be able to set boundaries of not doing work.”

Colbrecht communicates, with Officer Zachary Chinea about the detail of a case after the meeting. Colbrecht said she wants MU students to realize they can “come here for help.”

“I’ve been depressed before and it’s a heavy, heavy feeling,” she said. “To see someone else going through that is hard. You feel kind of helpless.”

One way she channels that experience is through her work as coordinator of MU Police’s Rape Aggression Defense program. The R.A.D. course aims to empower women to feel safer through self-defense and prevention strategies. This year, MU Police offered an additional session because so many women wanted to sign up — the result of rumors at the start of the semester about human trafficking in Columbia.

One of Colbrecht’s goals is to make people feel more capable and secure in themselves. For her, watching how strong women become throughout the course is gratifying.

She also sees herself as a mentor for college students who, away from home, begin to reckon with their sexual identity. A 2018 survey from the Human Rights Campaign found that 78 percent of LGBTQ teens have not come out to their parents because their parents have made negative comments about LGBTQ people. Colbrecht has been involved with MIZ-OUT, an organization on campus that supports people of gender and sexual minorities.
"(The class) made me feel more confident in my abilities if an attacker ever tries to rape me again," she said. "It took me back to when I was raped, and got me thinking about what I could have done." Mantle said she now thinks of Colbrecht as a friend.

"She did a phenomenal job teaching the class," Mantle said. "Every woman should take the course. I can't stress that enough."

**LOVE, MARRIAGE AND COMMITMENT**

Colbrecht and her wife, Kristen, have been married for almost two years. Originally from Michigan, Kristen, 31, moved to Columbia in 2011 and has worked in the MU International Center two years. Originally from Michigan, Kristen, 31, moved to Columbia in 2011 and has worked in the MU International Center ever since.

"I love April — everything about her," Kristen Colbrecht said. "Her humor, personality and the love that she shows all people." When Kristen first came to MU, she and Colbrecht became friends immediately. She could tell Colbrecht was genuine.

"She was just so welcoming and warm and compassionate," she said. "From there it was like I just want to be your best friend."

Kristen said their wedding day was the best day of her life, with family and friends showing love and support. It was also the first time Colbrecht had missed working a home MU football game in more than 20 years.

Colbrecht is grateful for the respectful and acceptance she’s experienced at MU Police. Closed-minded officers don’t last long, and most are even weeded out before they have a chance to try, she said.

"I didn’t come out of the closet until 2002," Colbrecht said. "I was worried about how that might be received, but with everyone here (at MU Police) it wasn’t any different." Colbrecht grew up in Lutheran schools and didn’t always feel accepted as a gay person. If she could give her younger self a piece of advice from the future, it’d be to “hang in.”

"High school for me was awful," she said. "I struggled with being gay in an environment that tells you you’re going to hell every day."

Colbrecht wishes she would’ve known that there are many good people who are gay, and it’s okay to be who you are.
The occasion, held at the Journalism School's helm in 2015 with plans to, among other things, bolster ties to The American, founded in 1928, a critical pipeline to talented African-American students in St. Louis and the surrounding areas. Some two years had passed since Kurpius had initially reached out to Suggs vowing to make strides where his predecessors had struggled: in identifying and recruiting talented African-American students, increasing black faculty and building what had historically been a lackluster relationship between what was the world's first School of Journalism and St. Louis' longest publishing weekly newspaper.

Earlier this fall, David Kurpius, dean of MU's School of Journalism, hosted a lunch on campus for Dr. Donald M. Suggs, publisher of The St. Louis American, the venerable black weekly newspaper. The moment was particularly proud for Kurpius, who took the Journalism School’s helm in 2015 with plans to, among other things, bolster ties to The American, founded in 1928, a critical pipeline to talented African-American students in St. Louis and the surrounding areas. Some two years had passed since Kurpius had initially reached out to Suggs vowing to make strides where his predecessors had struggled: in identifying and recruiting talented African-American students, increasing black faculty and doctoral students, and building a more racially inclusive culture. If Suggs had heard such assurances about collaborating before, he couldn’t help but be impressed by Kurpius’ passion. That such a pledge was coming in the aftermath of racial protests by African-American students seemed even more laudable.

I understand students of color need to see people like them not only in the classroom, but they also need to see people like them in the newsroom. If you’re going to do that, you have to practically look for people who can come play that role and do it in a way where it’s not just for the students of color, but it’s for all students. All students know that our faculty are going to mentor them well, they are going to give them good guidance, help them see the world differently, and help them to be good journalists. It’s important for our students to learn from diverse faculty members because they get a different perspective.

Recently, when we want to hire for two open positions at KOMU, I said to the hiring committee, if you don’t bring me a diverse pool, I’m not hiring anybody. As a result, of the three candidates we were looking at, two were people of color. And there was no external funding under that. We’ve changed the culture of what we’re doing here.

Additionally, I want people who are going to move the needle at the School. Some people frame it as a quality issue, and I hate that argument. Everybody we hire here has to be able to improve what we do, and there’s not a single way of measuring that.

WHAT WERE YOU SO CONFIDENT YOU COULD CHANGE THE CULTURE AT THE JOURNALISM SCHOOL?

I didn’t know if I could do it, but I knew I was going to fight to do it because I knew it was the right thing to do. I had a student, Glenn, when I was at Louisiana State University, and I was advising their National Association of Black Journalists chapter. This was a really smart African-American student and I was mentoring him. I was trying to get him to take this one class, and he said you don’t understand. I’m going to take this other class, I said, but Glenn, you don’t need that class. And he said, yes, but I’m not leaving this university until I take a class with an African-American professor. And I said, you’ve got to explain that to me. You’re going to take credits you don’t need because of that? And he said, yeah, it’s important to me. There should be more faculty of color here because they understand the perspective that I’m coming from, and they value my voice in class. And that conversation has stuck with me.

WHY IS THE UNIVERSITY OF MISSOURI SO IMPORTANT TO CARRY THIS EXTRA LOAD FOR THE BLACK FACULTY?

I think the likelihood of us doing a lot of hiring in the future is very limited. So, I think we need to do two things. We need more students of color in our graduate program and in our undergraduate program. And when I say graduate program, I’m thinking of building the faculty of the future through our doctoral program, which is why Dr. Perry is out there recruiting doctoral students of color. A lot of those students attend historically black colleges and universities. We also have to answer the question of why aren’t there more doctoral faculty of color. I don’t like the argument there isn’t anybody out there. We ought to be training them. A second thing is, I really think we can move the numbers on our African-American students in our undergraduate program. I think that’s important because this is the best place to get trained in journalism and strategic communication, and it opens doors.

WHAT ARE SOME OF THE JOURNALISM SCHOOL’S IMMEDIATE GOALS AROUND CULTURAL DIVERSITY?

I think a lot about culture. You will see me around the school asking faculty how they are doing, taking the temperature. I can’t make a faculty or staff member’s work life happier every day. It’s just not possible. But if a person’s overall trajectory is positive, then you’ll have a happy worker who will work hard and have fun doing it. The faculty will bring interesting ideas to the table, and I’m here to help them accomplish these new initiatives. I treat faculty of color like I treat any other faculty member. They are just part of the group.

I’ve had people ask me whether the black faculty get together and plan how we’re going to make a difference. Something seems not quite right about the assertion that it’s our responsibility to carry this extra load for the university. What are your thoughts about this?

I think the bottom line is let’s stop making excuses and start providing opportunities for people to succeed. I will hear, news organizations don’t have enough well trained people of color for their newsrooms. Then, we ought to train more people of color at a high level to be available for those newsrooms. If we don’t have the leadership, then we ought to be putting our students through the Novak Leadership Institute to train them. If you don’t have enough doctoral faculty of color, then we ought to build those positions down the road. It’s about trying to take a holistic approach to answering the issues we often lean on as excuses. If we continue to offer excuses, we’re not actually solving some of the problems this society faces.

WHAT ARE YOU LOOKING FOR AS IT RELATES TO DIVERSITY WITHIN THE JOURNALISM SCHOOL?

I think a lot about culture. You will see me around the school asking faculty how they are doing; taking the temperature. I can’t make a faculty or staff member’s work life happier every day. It’s just not possible. But if a person’s overall trajectory is positive, then you’ll have a happy worker who will work hard and have fun doing it. The faculty will bring interesting ideas to the table, and I’m here to help them accomplish these new initiatives. I treat faculty of color like I treat any other faculty member. They are just part of the group.

WHY IS THE UNIVERSITY OF MISSOURI SO IMPORTANT TO CARRY THIS EXTRA LOAD FOR THE BLACK FACULTY?

I think the likelihood of us doing a lot of hiring in the future is very limited. So, I think we need to do two things. We need more students of color in our graduate program and in our undergraduate program. And when I say graduate program, I’m thinking of building the faculty of the future through our doctoral program, which is why Dr. Perry is out there recruiting doctoral students of color. A lot of those students attend historically black colleges and universities. We also have to answer the question of why aren’t there more doctoral faculty of color. I don’t like the argument there isn’t anybody out there. We ought to be training them. A second thing is, I really think we can move the numbers on our African-American students in our undergraduate program. I think that’s important because this is the best place to get trained in journalism and strategic communication, and it opens doors.

WHAT ARE SOME OF THE JOURNALISM SCHOOL’S IMMEDIATE GOALS AROUND CULTURAL DIVERSITY?

I think the bottom line is let’s stop making excuses and start providing opportunities for people to succeed. I will hear, news organizations don’t have enough well trained people of color for their newsrooms. Then, we ought to train more people of color at a high level to be available for those newsrooms. If we don’t have the leadership, then we ought to be putting our students through the Novak Leadership Institute to train them. If you don’t have enough doctoral faculty of color, then we ought to build those positions down the road. It’s about trying to take a holistic approach to answering the issues we often lean on as excuses. If we continue to offer excuses, we’re not actually solving some of the problems this society faces.

WHAT ARE YOU LOOKING FOR AS IT RELATES TO DIVERSITY WITHIN THE JOURNALISM SCHOOL?

I understand students of color need to see people like them not only in the classroom, but they also need to see people like them in the newsroom. If you’re going to do that, you have to practically look for people who can come play that role and do it in a way where it’s not just for the students of color, but it’s for all students. All students know that our faculty are going to mentor them well, they are going to give them good guidance, help them see the world differently, and help them to be good journalists. It’s important for our students to learn from diverse faculty members because they get a different perspective.

Recently, when we want to hire for two open positions at KOMU, I said to the hiring committee, if you don’t bring me a diverse pool, I’m not hiring anybody. As a result, of the three candidates we were looking at, two were people of color. And there was no external funding under that. We’ve changed the culture of what we’re doing here.

Additionally, I want people who are going to move the needle at the School. Some people frame it as a quality issue, and I hate that argument. Everybody we hire here has to be able to improve what we do, and there’s not a single way of measuring that.
The University Concert Series strives to present a diversity of performances that educate, engage and entertain the communities it serves. Tickets for the 2018-19 Season are available now through Ticketmaster, or by calling or visiting the Missouri Theatre box office and the MSA/GPC box office in the MU Student Center.

**Show Me Opera: The Magic Flute**
- Friday, March 15
- Saturday, March 16

**Russian String Orchestra**
- Tuesday, March 19

**Plowman Chamber Music Competition Finals + Awards Ceremony**
- Sunday, March 24

**Missouri Contemporary Ballet & Columbia Chorale: Carmina Burana**
- Friday, April 5
- Saturday, April 6

**St. Louis Symphony Orchestra**
- Sunday, Jan. 20

**Legally Blonde, The Musical**
- Friday, Feb. 1

**Peg + Cat Live!**
- Wednesday, Feb. 6

**Canadian Brass**
- Monday, Feb. 11

**ETHEL and Robert Mirabel: The River**
- Thursday, Feb. 21

**Ozark Mountain Devils**
- Friday, May 3

**Missoula Children’s Theatre: The Frog Prince**
- Saturday, May 11

**Shanghai Opera Symphony Orchestra**
- Tuesday, Feb. 26

**Missouri Contemporary Ballet: Alice in Wonderland**
- Saturday, June 1
- Sunday, June 2

**Mannheim Steamroller Christmas by Chip Davis**
- Monday, Nov. 26

**The Great Russian Nutcracker**
- Wednesday, Nov. 28

**NOEL**
- Wednesday, Dec. 5

**The Ultimate Christmas Show (abridged)**
- Wednesday, Dec. 12

**Glenn Miller Orchestra**
- Saturday, April 13

**MU Choral Union: Mozart’s Requiem**
- Thursday, April 25

**Ozark Mountain Devils**
- Friday, May 3

**Missoula Children’s Theatre: The Frog Prince**
- Saturday, May 11

**Shanghai Opera Symphony Orchestra**
- Tuesday, Feb. 26

**Celtic Nights: Oceans of Hope**
- Tuesday, March 5

To obtain additional info, visit concertseries.missouri.edu/concert/
Homecoming Royalty Tyler Brumfield and Jalyn Johnson (center) celebrate with 2017 winners Tori Schaefer and Sean Earl. Photo by Jennifer Manning.

LBC performs its annual Step Show in Jesse Auditorium. Photos by Sam O’Keefe.

Four Front holds a Homecoming Solidarity Walk en route to Bluford-Brooks-Ridgel celebration. Photos by Ryan Gavin.
Members of the Mizzou community reflect on the significance of Lucile Bluford, George Brooks, and Gus Ridgel at the residence hall naming celebration. Photos by Ryan Gavin

Students, staff, and alumni participate in the annual Homecoming Parade. Photos by Ryan Gavin
The MU Legion of Black Collegians has a rich history and heritage at Mizzou. In the fall of 1968, LBC was established by black students at Mizzou who desired to have student leadership in place that would focus on issues facing underrepresented students. In October, LBC celebrated 50 years of service as an official MU Student Government.

Using the theme “An Eternal Legacy, Speaking Our Truth,” students members kicked off the weeklong celebration aimed at highlighting LBC’s impact and reinforcing a sense of belonging for black students at Mizzou. Celebratory events took place during Homecoming Week, giving current students as well as alumni an opportunity to look back at efforts made over the years to improve the black-student experience at Mizzou. The week’s activities included a Solidarity March, Sunday’s Best Talent Showcase, LBC Debates, Market Wednesday, the dedication of two residence halls named in honor of African-Americans who significantly contributed to Mizzou’s history, and the annual Black Family Reunion Tailgate.

Story by MORGAN MCABOY-YOUNG
Photo by TAYLAR WARREN

Since the group’s founding, LBC student members have gone on to sponsor annual programs, offer financial and programming support to GOBCC umbrella organizations, serve as hosts for the Big XII Conference on Black Student Government, and coordinate annual Black Culture Awareness Week activities at Mizzou.

To learn more about LBC, visit lbc.missouri.edu.

To help celebrate LBC’s longstanding history of service to the MU community, several campus partners served as sponsors for 50th Anniversary events:

- Department of Social Justice
- Division of Inclusion, Diversity & Equity
- Gaines/Oldham Black Culture Center
- Mizzou Black Alumni Network
- MSA/GPC Black Programming Committee

To learn more about LBC, visit lbc.missouri.edu.
A Mizzou tradition since 1974, International Day was celebrated on Sept. 25. Students from around the world showcased traditional clothing from their home countries and carried flags in the parade from Traditions Plaza to the Francis Quadrangle. The event, hosted by Missouri International Student Council (MISC) and the Missouri Students Association (MSA), finished with international food and drink.
Bree Newsome
Community Organizer and Activist Who Removed the Confederate Battle Flag from the South Carolina State House

Wednesday, Jan. 23 2019
7-8:30 p.m.
Jesse Auditorium
801 Conley Ave, Columbia, MO 65201

Taylor Cofield
Mizzou Alumna Has Global Trajectory

MU CELEBRATES DR. MARTIN LUTHER KING JR.

Injustice anywhere is a threat to justice everywhere. We are caught in an inescapable network of mutuality, tied in a single garment of destiny. Whatever affects one directly, affects all indirectly.

- Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.

Also an accomplished filmmaker and musician, Newsome skillfully outlines the relationship between activism and art, and captivates audiences as she describes in cinematic detail the heroic gestures of ordinary people on the front lines of activism. Free tickets for this event will available in mid-December at the MU Student Center.

For additional information regarding this event, please visit diversity.missouri.edu/our-work/mu-celebrates-martin-luther-king-jr/.

Cofield discovered a passion for the languages, histories and cultures of the Middle East, ultimately deciding to add a major in international studies. Her interests in foreign policy and diplomacy, paired with her passion for the region, has taken her across the world.

Cofield received a highly competitive scholarship from the Critical Language Scholarship Program through the U.S. Department of State to further her Arabic study. She traveled to Jordan in summer 2016 and lived with a host family for three months. She immersed herself in the local culture and intensively studied Arabic.

“I definitely learned that, regardless of [our] societies and cultures, we have a lot more in common than we allow ourselves to believe,” she says. “That’s something I got from living with a host family and being forced to speak a different language, to live in a different culture. It was something that was new to me, but it didn’t feel odd.”

Cofield credits her experience in Jordan with leading her to the Thomas R. Pickering Foreign Affairs Fellowship, which provides graduate students with financial support, mentoring and professional development to prepare them for a career with the State Department.

“It basically set me up for life,” she says.

In addition to her coursework, Cofield’s career path was shaped by her out-of-class activities. She participated in student government as a senator in the Missouri Students Association and a member of the group’s social justice committee, which tied in well with her political science and international studies majors.

She was also a three-year athlete in pole vault, which is what brought her to Mizzou. She liked her coach’s emphasis on academics. “We’re athletes, but we’re students first,” she remembers the coach saying.

“Ultimately, you’re here to get an education.”

Her education not only earned her the Pickering fellowship but also the Federal Harry S. Truman Scholarship in spring 2017.

Cofield graduated from Mizzou this past May and will do two years of graduate school at Texas A&M University, studying international affairs with a focus on national security and diplomacy. Her involvement as a Pickering fellow will ultimately lead her to a career as a diplomat with the U.S. Foreign Service.

Cofield credits her Mizzou mentors for teaching her to stand strong in her convictions and to find her voice, one of the reasons why she decided to get involved in student government.

“Don’t be afraid to speak up, not only for yourself but for others, because if you don’t, you never know who will,” she says.

“That’s something they instilled in me.”

Sometimes small choices can lead to big opportunities.

Mizzou alumna Taylor Cofield always knew she wanted to study political science in college, but she didn’t know exactly how. It all came into focus when she took an Arabic class during her freshman year. The class opened up a new world and has shaped her career path ever since.
Former MU basketball and NBA player Keyon Dooling showed students during a discussion Wednesday that nobody is immune from personal struggles or above asking for help.

Dooling, 38, who spoke to nearly 1,000 people in Jesse Auditorium, opened with an anecdote discussing past traumatic experiences, which he wrote about in a May essay titled "Running From a Ghost." The essay appeared in The Players’ Tribune and received nationwide attention.

The essay described how a man inappropriately touched Dooling in a restroom in June 2012, which brought back memories of childhood violence and sexual assault.

"I didn’t eat for days. I didn’t want to see those visions that were coming, so I didn’t sleep for days," he said. "I dwelled on PTSD, and I didn’t even know what it was."

When Dooling was 7 years old, a 14-year-old invited Dooling and a friend to his apartment, according to The Players’ Tribune essay. The boy turned on a pornographic video and made Dooling and his friend watch before sexually assaulting them.

At age 11, Dooling also witnessed gun violence at a party, he said on Wednesday. Those experiences led Dooling to begin drinking, doing drugs and having sex.

Dooling described his journey from June 2012 to now: He stopped playing for the Boston Celtics, spent four days in a psychiatric hospital and began going to therapy.

"I remember being on the bottom floor of the mental institution, saying to myself, ‘How did I get here?’" Dooling said part of his journey included being open with his family about his experiences. He and his wife were high school sweethearts, but she didn’t know until after the 2012 incident of his traumatic experiences.

Now, he said, he makes a point to be candid with her and their children. Their children were young when he began therapy, and he didn’t know until after the 2012 incident of his traumatic experiences.

"All the stuff he said about going to therapy, there’s help out there, and you can get it if you need to," Ralston said.

Though Dooling said he’s in a much better place with his mental health now, he’s by no means “fixed.” He has a routine involving affirmations, prayer, yoga, exercise, essential oils and at least four therapy sessions a year.

Dooling grew up in Fort Lauderdale, Florida, and attended MU before he was drafted in 2000 by the Orlando Magic before a draft-day trade to the Los Angeles Clippers. He later played for the Miami Heat, Magic, New Jersey Nets, Milwaukee Bucks, Boston Celtics and Memphis Grizzlies.

Dooling was also the first vice president for the NBA Player’s Association.

Though he had anxiety throughout his life, he thought it was due to his high-stress profession and not any underlying issues, like the past violence and sexual assault.

Dooling said part of the reason he did not speak out earlier was because he was taught to be tough as a child.

"Men, we’re told (crying) is not natural," he said. "So we’re navigating from a place where we’re just wrong. We’re missing the mark.”

Dooling encouraged students to use the mental health resources available on campus. He said that if he had not disregarded his anxiety, he would have gone to therapy in college and may have retired from the NBA later in life.

MU freshman Kurtis Ralston listened to Dooling’s speech, and he said afterward that he went because he knows many people who have mental health issues.

"All the stuff he said about going to therapy, there’s help out there, and you can get it if you need to," Ralston said.

"If we help heal them, those guys are influencers. A lot of us can relate to that," Dooling said.
As trans and nonbinary people have gained more public visibility, so has the singular “they.” But whether social conservatives like it or not, the nonbinary “they” isn’t even upon which the sins of the singular “they” are heaped. But certainly the pronouns face a nonpolitical hurdle to acceptance: They just don’t feel familiar to everyone. Wilkinsen is the author of “Born on the Edge of Race and Gender: A Voice for Cultural Competency” and has been an educator and activist in the trans movement in San Francisco for decades. “Back in the ’90s, the language was different,” he says. The default gender-neutral pronoun in his community at the time was not the singular “they.” But possession was the singular thing he continued. “It was ‘hir’ pronounced like ‘here,’ or ‘zir’— ‘Zir walked into the room, is that hir bottle, or zir bottle?’ It was awkward. It was about asking people to navigate a secret language that most people didn’t understand.”

To linguists, languages change over time, subject to any number of social, political, and geographic factors. Trans and nonbinary people who use alternate pronouns see the absurdity of allowing a tiny ruling class of 17th-century Britain — a much smaller population than the number of Americans who may identify along the gender spectrum today — to legislate the language, and invented pronoun mania — “thon,” “ze,” and more — swept the English-speaking world.

With the pronoun “they,” nonbinary people are using an alternative gender-neutral term that has gained more and more use and acceptance because it is flexible and can be used to refer to an individual without specifying a gender.

“It’s easy to think that the creation of new and alternative pronouns in the 19th century was just lexical backfilling, but that’s an oversimplification,” Jeong says. “Those people who used the pronoun wanted it to be a gender-neutral way to talk about people who didn’t use binary or gendered pronouns. They wanted to use a gender-neutral pronoun and did not want to designate a gender identity.”

And whatever the fate of coinages such as “ze,” singular “they” will keep doing what it’s been doing at least since the 1300s, even as grammarians and language writers rail against it as ungrammatical: not only is the written record replete with its usage, but a search for the word “they” — even within its context where the older forms have one set of meanings and the newer forms have another — reveals that it is a “sacred no less than bowing to idols in the town square.”
A love of learning and serving their community has led Sterling Waldman down many paths. Some people describe them as a change agent; others as a role model. All of them wonder exactly how Waldman does everything they do.

Waldman, currently pursuing degrees in both Law and a master’s in Social Work, graduated with a bachelor’s in Women’s and Gender Studies from Mizzou in May of 2018. And they earned four minors: Black Studies, Religious Studies, Sociology, and Leadership and Public Service. With the Multicultural Certificate. From the Honors College. Oh, and they graduated Summa Cum Laude. In just three years.

With such extensive academic accomplishments, it’s hard to envision there being much time for anything else in life. But Waldman, who came to Mizzou from Chesterfield, was as involved in organizations and extracurricular activities as they were in academics. Why do so much? Their philosophy is ‘get in where you fit in.’

“There were needs that weren’t being met,” Waldman says. “I’m the type of person who kind of fills gaps. Sometimes you see a population that isn’t being served, and people need things.”

The first organization Waldman founded was Aces and Aros, a group for asexual and aromantic students and allies to learn and find support. Next was Oasis, a trans student group, that formerly was a program in the LGBTQ Resource Center. “We set it up to center the most marginalized voices in the trans community and voices we were told had been left out of the conversation to that point,” Waldman says.

They also founded the Gabriella Rosa Justice Support System. The fund is run by students, for students, with the purpose of helping transgender folks continue their education in the case of financial hardship.

Waldman also got involved with organizations that already existed at Mizzou.

Waldman was also an active member of the Missouri Students Association (MSA) from the moment they stepped on campus. One of the biggest undertakings? The bathroom mapping project.

What’s next

Though it’s not an official program, Waldman plans on finishing both their JD and MSW in four years. And they’re still staying involved on campus despite the taxing academic workload.

“There’s a lot of people from various backgrounds in law school, which is cool,” Waldman says. “I’ll invite people to attend events on things like relationship and sexual violence prevention with me, and they’re like ‘That sounds interesting! I’ve never been to anything like that before.’ So it’s good to engage in conversations with people who don’t have that background knowledge.”

The first organization Waldman founded was Aces and Aros, a group for asexual and aromantic students and allies to learn and find support. Next was Oasis, a trans student group, that formerly was a program in the LGBTQ Resource Center. “We set it up to center the most marginalized voices in the trans community and voices we were told had been left out of the conversation to that point,” Waldman says.

They also founded the Gabriella Rosa Justice Support System. The fund is run by students, for students, with the purpose of helping transgender folks continue their education in the case of financial hardship.

Waldman also got involved with organizations that already existed at Mizzou.

Because they lived in the residence halls all three years and continue to do so while pursuing their advanced degrees, they were a member of RHA. One of Waldman’s pursuits there? Expanding the gender neutral offering, which Waldman lived in, to the rest of campus housing. As of fall 2018, students anywhere can enjoy it.

Waldman was also an active member of the Missouri Students Association (MSA) from the moment they stepped on campus. One of the biggest undertakings? The bathroom mapping project.

What’s next

Though it’s not an official program, Waldman plans on finishing both their JD and MSW in four years. And they’re still staying involved on campus despite the taxing academic workload.

“Everyone says you should keep very busy in your first year because that’s when you have the most time,” Waldman says. “But I’ve had a lot of time in which to do things that I didn’t have time to do in my first year.”

“During the summer, I was able to work eight hours a day, six days a week, on the mapping project,” Waldman says. “It was exhausting, but it was something I really wanted to do. It was empowering to see that I could do that.”

“I’ve found a lot of people who are really interested in getting involved, which is cool, because as law students we don’t have very much time,” Waldman says. “But they’re interested!”

After graduating, Waldman’s keeping their plans relatively open since there are so many niches. They’re interested in education fields like civil rights, Title IX, ADA, IDEA work at a large school district or university setting. Another route Waldman is looking at is diversity hiring and training at large law firms. Regardless of the specific path they take, activism, advocacy and community involvement will be a part of their life forever.

“I really love learning, and I just keep questioning things, pushing myself and pushing the people around me to question what they’re learning,” Waldman says.
A concrete slab lined with gravel and dirt sits behind the house. Bushes and stray trash cans dot the edges of the slab, waiting patiently to claim victims who venture too far from the center. Eventually — it always happens — someone does just that and falls prey to the obstructions.

Spacing is important in basketball, after all. Around the holidays, a young Brandon Lee can be found on that court. If he isn’t in the back shooting hoops, he’s out front, running down and tackling a ballcarrier in a pickup football game.

His opponents are his family. The house belongs to his grandparents — the site of massive Lee family gatherings. Brandon’s grandfather, David Lee, had seven siblings and fathered 11 children. Many of David’s kids — including Brandon’s father, Kenny Lee — have at least five children, as well. Factor in great-grandchildren, and the extended Lee family has upward of 100 members.

Family get-togethers are common, especially since the bulk of the family lives in Indianapolis. When the time comes to round everyone up, the meeting spot is usually David’s house.

Spacing is important in families, too. While the kids occupy the front and backyard, the rest of the family packs inside. Spades and kemps are favorite card games among the group, and football is on the TV. Of course, not everyone can fit in the living room, so others mingle and chat elsewhere, sometimes forced to go upstairs when the main level fills.

On occasion, like at a recent reunion, the family has to migrate to a local park to accommodate everyone.

“Gosh, you just can’t count how many people were there,” Kenny said.

The Lees, like a lot of families, take great pride in their last name. Not only does it bring them together, but its meaning also holds a special significance for them.

The name originates from an Old English word, “leah,” meaning meadow, or in other translations, shelter and protection. David urged his kids to live out the latter meaning, to be a source of strength to those around them. Kenny did the same with his children.

It’s a big reason why Missouri’s redshirt senior linebacker is starting his pursuit of a Master’s in Business Administration this semester.
Lee is fully aware of the impact he can have on the people in his community, inside and outside his family. The master’s degree is more than just a backup plan.

Brandon Lee and his mom after his undergraduate graduation from MU in May 2018.

Lea is aware of the family’s support and how much his family has contributed to his education. The family’s support of his education is more than just a backup plan.

Lea's family is aware of the impact that he can have on the people in his community, inside and outside his family. The master’s degree is more than just a backup plan.

Putting the Wheels in Motion

Two years. That’s how long it will likely take Lee to finish the program.

And that doesn’t account for the time he has already invested in blazing his path.

In the summer of 2017, Lee interned with Krilogy Financial in St. Louis. Two or three days a week, the linebacker went to summer workouts with the Tigers in the morning, then hopped in the car to drive to the Krilogy offices in Creve Coeur, where he worked the rest of the day before driving back to Columbia at about 6:30 p.m.

And he wasn’t just the intern who makes coffee runs. Lee helped analyze client portfolios and evaluated risk and return projections while working under Kent Skornia, Krilogy’s president and CEO.

“He was knee deep in everything for us,” said Skornia, who played football at Missouri in 1995 and 1996. “He’s a hard worker, which can get you pretty far, but he also has some God-given talents in terms of his brains that are pretty off the charts.”

Lee recently fixed a little of that brain power. This past summer Lee took two courses at Missouri and interned at Edward Jones in Columbia. On top of that, he took three online classes through Harvard as part of the prerequisites for Missouri’s master’s program. Yes, that Harvard. But Lee doesn’t see it as that big of a deal.

“If I was to get a true certificate from Harvard or something on paper saying that, it would be really cool. But I can’t walk around and say, ‘I did this and that at Harvard,’ he said.

This semester — and those to come — don’t offer much difficulty than the courses he took as an undergraduate, he only needed one word to describe his schedule. “Busy,” he said.

On a recent Wednesday, the Tigers had workouts, film and practice from 6 to 11 a.m., but Lee had to leave for class before practice concluded. Another class — one from 6 to 9 p.m. — awaited him later, as well. Afterward, he decided the long day was worth a reward.

“It’s changing the standard,” Lee said, “and the general standard back at home for those that look up to me — whether it’s those that are looking from the shadows, or that I don’t know that are looking up to me, or my nieces and nephews, my younger cousins, all my family members.

“As soon as that (last) class finished, I called Texas Roadhouse and ordered the Wednesday steak,” he said. The task ahead certainly isn’t a cakewalk, but Lee believes it’s manageable and said the classes are more enjoyable.

Put the wheels in motion. The lineupbacker and graduate student who carries his last name well.
Toward Inclusive Excellence are to help participants develop according to their website, the objectives of the Journey Toward Inclusive Excellence Boone County’s “Journey Toward Inclusive Excellence.” Along my “journey,” I would attend in a personalized “passport.” In the spring of 2017, my adviser encouraged me to participate in Inclusive Excellence Columbia, Missouri.

Being a life-long traveler, I never would have guessed that I would attend such a program and learn about the importance of humility and empathy. We humans have a lot to learn from one another. Being a life-long student — to me at least — means traveling the world. Most of all, I have learned the importance of being a life-long traveler. I never would have guessed that I could travel extensively and meaningfully without leaving Columbia, Missouri.

The Passport Program Provides New Experiences, Inspires Hope

Column by BRANDON WOLAK

Wolak is a PhD Student in Educational Leadership & Policy Analysis, the President of the Educational Leadership Graduate Student Association, and a Carter Center Fellow.

In the 34 years I have been on this earth, I have lived in four different states and visited 11 countries. My computer’s hard drive is filled with a lifetime of memories from my travels. I have made new friends, visited landmarks, eaten new food, drank delicious beer and wine, and even found time to wonder off the well-worn tourist trail.

Through all these experiences, I have learned a lot about myself and the world. Most of all, I have learned the importance of humility and empathy. We humans have a lot to learn from one another. Being a life-long student — to me at least — means being a life-long traveler. I never would have guessed that I could travel extensively and meaningfully without leaving Columbia, Missouri.

TAKING A JOURNEY

In spring of 2017, my adviser encouraged me to participate in Inclusive Excellence Boone County’s “Journey Toward Inclusive Excellence.” Along my “journey,” I would attend various “experiences” throughout Columbia and record my attendance in a personalized “passport.”

According to their website, the objectives of the Journey Toward Inclusive Excellence are to help participants develop self-awareness of biases and the roles such biases play both personally and professionally, to learn how to create a community where all feel valued and can thrive, to recognize privilege and oppression and their twin impacts on our community, and to commit to impacting the systems which oppress others personally and professionally. Over the course of spring and summer, I attended a variety of Passport Experiences. Some were big and celebratory; others were small and directly focused on stated objectives. At each experience, I was surprised and encouraged by the willingness for community members to celebrate and critically discuss race, gender, religion, and identity.

Although the Journey Toward Inclusive Excellence is tied to the University of Missouri’s Division of Inclusion, Diversity & Equity, members of the broader Columbia community attended each experience I visited.

I met nurses, retirees, teachers, and stay-at-home parents. I also met people of diverse ages, skin colors, genders, and sexual orientations. I took note of participant demographics at each of the smaller experiences that I attended, and I was typically one of the only participants associated with the University of Missouri. At most, I was one of two or three white males present.

While I attended nine total experiences from March through August, five experiences stood out to me as particularly noteworthy.

FIVE STANDOUTS

My first experience on the journey took place on March 6, 2018. The experience was titled “Unnatural Causes: When the Bough Breaks.”

Not knowing what to expect, I arrived at the Columbia/Boone County Public Health and Human Services building at noon and found my way back to a small meeting area. After checking in (and earning my first Passport stamp) I took a seat at one of the tables, which were arranged in a U-shape. One of the presenters greeted us and explained that we would go around the room and introduce ourselves — there were 12 of us, plus two presenters. Next, we watched a segment of the documentary titled Unnatural Causes.

This segment focused on the relatively high number of infants in the U.S. who die before their first birthday. Worse still, we learned that Black infants are nearly twice as likely to die before their first birthday, even when these babies are born to parents with high socioeconomic status. I was stunned and saddened by what I learned, but I was equally encouraged by the thoughtful, solution-oriented conversation that took place afterward.

Not all experiences were as sobering as my first. In fact, my second experience was the exact opposite. On April 4, I was fortunate to attend the Ellington’s Evening of Music and Poetry featuring Lalah Hathaway.

Before Hathaway even took the stage, Jesse Auditorium was filled to the rafters with energy from spoken word poetry and soaring bass solos. DJ Spark spun records during the intermission while the crowd parted and danced, eagerly anticipating the main act. And then… Wow! Hathaway flat-out owned the night. Hit after hit, Hathaway’s soulful voice sent chills down my spine. I remember looking around during her set and seeing everyone in the auditorium absolutely spellbound. This experience was my favorite because it brought together the entire community to celebrate our common humanity through art.

The third notable event that I attended was the Mid-Journey Mixer at Kimball Ballroom on the campus of Stephens College. Like the Ellington’s Evening of Music and Poetry, the Mid-Journey Mixer was celebratory and well-attended. I arrived to find the ballroom set up with circular banquet tables. Music played as children enjoyed a book sale and photo area. A group of teenage hip hop dancers warmed up in one corner of the event space, while the high school slam poetry team nervously rehearsed near the entrance.

By the time the event started, there were well over 100 participants. To kick off the event, Nikki McInerney welcomed the attendees and discussed the successes of the Journey Toward Inclusive Excellence at the midway point. Next, Dr. Kevin McDonald, MU Vice Chancellor and UM System Chief Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Officer, spoke about the program’s successes, as well as the importance of improved inclusion, diversity, and equity initiatives throughout Columbia.

Following these addresses, the audience enjoyed performances from several dance teams, a slam poetry team, and a student band. Attendees then mingled, savored refreshments, and shared experiences. Again, I left the event feeling encouraged by seeing people from across the community come together in celebration.

The fourth experience that I attended was the Inclusive Excellence Mile. By this point in my journey, I knew what to expect: community, positivity, and celebration. The Mile Run was equal parts pep rally, athletic competition, and block party. As music pumped throughout the area around Stankowski Field on the MU campus, young and old alike gathered to chat, snack, and cheer as participants ran a timed mile.

After everyone had crossed the finish line, attendees strolled around Stankowski Field and ate a catered lunch. Of all the events that I attended, this one had a decidedly collegiate feel, as there were many attendees who were clearly university students. With that said, I saw a few familiar, non-student faces from previous experiences that I had attended.

Finally, I attended a community meeting that focused on bringing together Columbia residents to discuss issues concerning access to healthful food. The experience was held at the Columbia Activity and Recreation Center, and as best as I could tell, not all attendees were participating in the Journey Toward Inclusive Excellence. There were several interactive displays throughout this experience, and each display featured a presenter who asked participants to explore solutions for providing access to healthful food for all residents of the city.

Because I am not a resident — I live in Kansas City — I found myself observing more in this setting than I had in previous experiences. As I took in my surroundings and the interactions all around me, I was overcome with feelings of hope. Roughly 40 people were engaged in conversations about making their community a better, healthier place for all. The conversations were all about solutions and not just diagnosing a problem. Again, I left feeling hopeful.

During my experiences with the Journey Toward Inclusive Excellence, I became a better citizen and traveler without ever leaving Columbia. My critiques for the program are the same that I have for traveling in general: seeking and enjoying celebrations, food, and music is easy, while leaving the well-worn trail in search of more challenging experiences remains difficult.

I hope that non-celebratory experiences gain greater traction in future iterations of this program. It would be a wonderful sight to see hundreds of community members contemplating the challenges of infant mortality or access to food. Nevertheless, I have hope for a brighter tomorrow. I am inspired by what I saw during my journey, and I am better for having traveled.
DR. MARTIN LUTHER KING JR. CELEBRATION

Bree Newsome
Community Organizer and Activist Who Removed the Confederate Battle Flag from the South Carolina State House

Wednesday, Jan. 23, 2019
7–8:30 p.m.
Jesse Auditorium
801 Conley Ave, Columbia, MO 65201

“Injustice anywhere is a threat to justice everywhere. We are caught in an inescapable network of mutuality, tied in a single garment of destiny. Whatever affects one directly, affects all indirectly.”
— Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.

This contemporary civil rights icon first garnered national attention for her daring act of peaceful disobedience in June 2015. Following the brutal murder of nine black parishioners at Mother Emmanuel Church in Charleston, South Carolina, Newsome climbed the flagpole at the South Carolina statehouse and pulled down the Confederate Battle flag as a protest against racist symbolism. Her arrest galvanized public opinion and led to the permanent removal of the flag.

As a recognized and celebrated voice on the topics of injustice and racial discrimination, Bree brings to light the importance of leadership development in building and sustaining social movements.

Also an accomplished filmmaker and musician, Newsome skillfully outlines the relationship between activism and art, and captivates audiences as she describes in cinematic detail the heroic gestures of ordinary people on the front lines of activism.

Free tickets for this event will available in mid-December at the Missouri Theatre box office and the MSA/GPC box office in the MU Student Center.

For additional information regarding this event, please visit diversity.missouri.edu/our-work/mu-celebrates-martin-luther-king-jr/.