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**IDEALS**
- Increasing faculty representation

**MAKING MOVES**
- News from around Mizzou with special features about promoting inclusive clothing globally (page 8), understanding diversity (page 12) and more

**JELANI COBB**
- New York Magazine writer Jelani Cobb visits campus to discuss how racism and slavery have shaped American history

**TERERAI TRENT**
- Activist Tererai Trent visits Mizzou to speak about empowering women

**GLOBAL SHOWCASE**
- Different artists and groups showcased a variety of performances at MU’s Global Showcase

**IDE EXCELLENT GRANT RECIPIENTS**
- A closer look at this year’s recipients of the IDE Excellence Grants

**BREE NEWSOME**
- A recap of Bree Newsome’s visit to MU for the annual MLK celebration

**2019 BIG XII CONFERENCE**
- Celebrating this year’s Big XII Conference on Black Student Government at MU

**MIZZOU SPOTLIGHT**
- Spotlight stories from students, faculty and staff involved across Mizzou
MU is making strides towards Inclusive Excellence in every facet of the university experience, and the Division of Inclusion, Diversity & Equity is at the heart of these changes. The university's Inclusive Excellence Framework requires that we engage in active, intentional and ongoing engagement with the various combination of human and social differences to achieve excellence as an institution.

For MU, excellence is a more diverse student body, faculty and staff; a climate that is supportive and respectful; a community that is engaged in learning varied perspectives; an institutional infrastructure that drives and achieves diversity goals, and improved outcomes and reduced disparities for historically underrepresented and underserved populations in Columbia.

One of MU's strategic goals is to increase its underrepresented minority faculty from 8% to 15% by 2028. Faculty are central to our institution's educational mission, and to student development. Assensoh (2003) has argued that hiring racially and ethnically diverse faculty members is necessary to the sustained relevance and growth of the academy. A diverse faculty enhances our students' perspectives, and is better equipped to prepare them for the reality of living and working in an increasingly diverse society.

In pursuit of MU's faculty recruitment goals, the Office of Inclusive Engagement (OIE) has partnered with the Office of the Provost and Human Resources to enhance the university’s recruitment process. In January 2019, the university began to require a specific and targeted plan to recruit individuals from underrepresented groups for every tenure-track faculty posting. Plans include ideas such as posting job openings on industry specific job boards and listservs whose leaders are predominantly from underrepresented groups, growing pipelines by providing mentorship and professional development to graduate students from underrepresented groups, and using diversity-related awards as a criterion to develop source lists for candidates.

Additionally, since MU is particularly interested in attracting candidates for employment who have demonstrably pursued inclusion in their educational and/or employment background, OIE has published a faculty recruitment guide with sample questions designed to solicit this information from candidates. View it at [bit.ly/FacRecruitGuide](http://bit.ly/FacRecruitGuide). OIE also provides guidance to search committees throughout the recruitment and interview process on topics such as evaluation rubrics and the use of diversity statements, with the intention of infusing inclusion into faculty recruitment practices.

OIE is also working to enhance the inclusivity of MU’s faculty retention practices. OIE sponsors the annual IDE Excellence Grant Initiative which provides one-time funding for faculty or staff to creatively strengthen teaching; pedagogical practices; or research with inclusion, diversity and/or equity implications for MU’s increasingly diverse community and student populations.

This year OIE also provided two scholarships for the Summer Faculty Success Program hosted by the National Center for Faculty Development and Diversity. We look forward to partnering with academic departments on future retention initiatives. ✭
A new team at MU will research body image to improve sex education and mental health in Columbia and Central Missouri. The Center for Body Image Research & Policy was founded by MU assistant professors of social work and human development Virginia Ramseyer Winter and Antoinette Landor. The center will apply research on body image to improve health and well-being in Columbia and Central Missouri. It brings together like-minded researchers from four universities.

The center doesn’t have a physical location but is housed for now within the MU College of Human Environmental Sciences, which provided funds to open the center.

“(The center is) something that’s been in the back of our minds for quite some time,” said Ramseyer Winter, who will be the Center’s director. “Dr. Landor and I have been collaborating since the fall of ’15 on various projects, and now just felt like the right time.”

In addition to Ramseyer Winter and Landor, whose role will be assistant director, the center comprises eight faculty members from universities across the nation working on body image research, including how schools, families and the media affect people’s perceptions of their bodies.

Ramseyer Winter also invited three graduate students from the MU School of Social Work to work with the center, including Michaella Ward, who is pursuing a double master’s in social work and public health.

“(Ramseyer Winter has) been my mentor basically ever since I met her, so she’s told me about this dream of hers to have this center on body image research in the U.S. and not having found one before,” Ward said. “Actually seeing her create this while I’m still here as her little mentee is so inspiring.”
Along with her research, Ward plans to research government policies that address body image and how the center’s work can influence future policy. Others at the center may be more familiar with policy, but Ward doesn’t know if any have worked directly in it.

“We all have experience with research, so the research in the name comes easy,” she said. “Policy is harder because for most of us it’s not as familiar.”

Ward’s job, as envisioned, will entail doing outreach to potential community partners. The center already has four in Missouri: the Teen Pregnancy & Prevention Partnership, Spectrum Health Care, Integrated Behavioral Health Clinic and Great Circle. What the partnerships will entail hasn’t been decided, but one idea being considered is having them implement the center’s research.

Kelli Canada, director of Integrated Behavioral Health Clinic, said she envisions the center piloting some kind of intervention.

“That is kind of a first-level testing to see if people like the intervention and respond well to the intervention,” she said.

For example, the center could help patients with body changes that may come with using psychotropic drugs. Canada said she has never worked at a behavioral/mental health facility that addressed this issue.

“Honestly, one of the side effects of a lot of psychiatric medication is weight gain, and my clients have kind of accepted it, like, ‘I don’t like my body anymore. Oh, well,’” she said. “I think that for some people, that ‘Oh, well’ isn’t how they’re feeling, that there’s more that we need to address there.”

Ramseyer Winter said the center’s research could have many implications for public health. Body image is connected to many fields, such as foster care and mental health, she said. For example, she just finished a research project that aims to improve sexual health and body image in teen foster children, who often miss sex education because they move around so much.

“Broadly speaking, we’re focused on body image and health and well being outcomes,” she said. “But we get to research and learn different things about different populations, and that’s one of things I enjoy the most.”

Ramseyer Winter is currently focused on working with community members in local areas, but she hopes to eventually broaden the center’s reach.

“Ideally, it’s going to directly impact folks in Columbia and Missouri ... and then beyond,” she said.

Ramseyer Winter encourages anyone interested in the Center to make contact via its website.
The need for more scientists and engineers is a persistent issue plaguing industries throughout the United States. Several initiatives created to prioritize science, technology, engineering and mathematics in schools are helping educators prepare more diverse students and workers for STEM fields. However, these efforts might be falling short when it comes to representation of people of color, according to a University of Missouri researcher.

The National Science Foundation reports that women of color constitute fewer than 1 in 10 employed scientists and engineers. And the women of color who are in STEM aren’t necessarily seeing their identities reflected and incorporated in STEM fields.

“Imagine walking into a lab or a classroom and seeing pictures of people on the walls that are nothing like you,” said Terrell Morton, the Preparing Future Faculty postdoctoral fellow at the University of Missouri. “People have a very narrow view of what science looks like, and right now, its older white men wearing goggles and holding beakers. When a young woman of color sees those images in a learning environment, it can make her feel unwelcome because there is nothing in that image that represents her.”

Morton believes that educators can help support women of color pursuing STEM degrees by creating inclusive classroom environments and prioritizing activities that intentionally and meaningfully incorporate students’ personal identities and experiences. A few examples include:

- Being mindful of the images on the walls of classrooms and labs and the identities they represent.
- Being mindful of the readings used, problems investigated, solutions generated in courses and whose voice(s) and communities are and are not represented.
- Asking students to share their stories, backgrounds and goals with the class. This encourages community support and helps all students succeed.
- Provide diverse historical and contemporary role models (their background and their work) in STEM classes through case studies, stories, films, guest speakers and class instruction.

Morton interviewed 10 black women in STEM programs at two southeastern universities to hear their experiences of pursuing a degree in a field that is overwhelmingly white and male. Morton found that despite many alienating and isolating classroom experiences in pursuit of their degrees, all of the black women in the study firmly wanted to continue in the field.

“The women understand their identity to be both socially regulated and self-determined,” Morton said. “This means that they recognize that society feels a certain way about black women and pictures them in certain roles. However, the women also saw themselves as successful and resilient because they are thriving in a field that society tells them they shouldn’t be in.”

Morton said many of the women felt their career goals were challenged outside of the classroom as well, often by members of their immediate community. For example, one of the women Morton spoke with said a person in her church pulled her aside and told her that she was being too ambitious by pursuing a doctoral degree in a STEM field. The woman encouraged the student to think seriously about a plan B, in case things “went south” for her. Morton says these micro-aggressive behaviors are reflective of the implicit biases that people develop and can hinder society’s progress over time. However, educators can use the tips above to create an inclusive and supportive environment for black women.

“People buy into these notions that only certain people can access certain spaces and do certain things,” Morton said. “When somebody tells a black woman that her STEM studies are too ambitious, they are inferring that STEM careers are reserved for people who don’t look like her. However, the women I spoke to were very strong-willed despite these challenges and asserted that they would write their own stories and not buy into other people’s narratives.”

“#BlackGirlMagic: The identity conceptualization of Black women in undergraduate STEM education,” was published in Science Education. Eileen C. Parsons, professor of science education at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, is the co-author of this study. This project was supported by the National Science Foundation (grant no. 143681). The content is solely the responsibility of the authors and does not necessarily represent the official views of the funding agencies.
THREE MISSOURI STUDENTS SELECTED FOR AAF’S 2019 ‘MOST PROMISING MULTICULTURAL STUDENTS PROGRAM’

Nour Feghali, Rachel Kim and Alicia White – all three studying strategic communication – were among the 50 students from around the nation selected by a panel of industry judges.

“We’re really proud that we have three students who are representing not only themselves, but the Missouri program so well,” said Holly Higginbotham, associate professional practice professor and adviser to Mizzou’s AAF chapter. “The Missouri Method can be demanding on students. These three take advantage of every opportunity. Not to take away from what they do in their personal lives, but our program does attract the best and brightest. The excellence of these three stands out.”

Nour Feghali grew up in Lebanon and moved to the U.S. in 2016 to attend college. At Mizzou, she tutors both French and Arabic at the Learning Center and also sits on the executive board of the Missouri International Student Council. Feghali also served as a Mizzou International Experience Ambassador this past summer, assisting kids from Brazil, Vietnam, Serbia and China as they had an opportunity to see what higher education is like in the U.S. and the different kinds of programs offered. This spring, she will be a part of Mojo Ad, working as a researcher on a campaign for Chevrolet. After graduation, she hopes to work for a large, multinational nonprofit or work for a humanitarian client at an agency.

Rachel Kim is from Rochester Hills, Mich., a member of Chi Omega Sorority and also serves as on the Mizzou Tour Team. In addition, she is working as the creative director for a campaign for Wienerschnitzel on Mizzou’s National Student Advertising Competition (NSAC) Team, hosted by AAF. Though excited to participate in the AAF program and spend time in NYC again, Kim says that her outlook on her career and how she is planning her life after graduation has changed drastically during her time at Mizzou and that she’s found beauty in not planning too far in advance.

Alicia White is from Dallas, a member of Delta Tau Chapter of Alpha Kappa Alpha Sorority, Inc., a teaching assistant for Mizzou Black Women’s Initiative and also serves as a J-School Ambassador. She is also working as a brand strategist for Mizzou’s NSAC team. A sorority friend told her about the AAF program and she knows it serves as a tremendous stepping-stone to a career. Her post-graduation plans include travelling to Kenya with her best friend and spending a month abroad. One of White’s favorite memories was when we were leaving after a concert at Mizzou and jumping and singing in a bounce house, from which she could see the columns and Tiger Plaza.

MISSOURI SCHOOL OF JOURNALISM

Presented by SCHOOL OF JOURNALISM STAFF

Strategic Communication Undergrads Will Spend Four Days in February Interviewing and Networking in New York City

Three Missouri School of Journalism undergraduates have been selected for the 2019 Most Promising Multicultural Students Program sponsored by the American Advertising Federation. AAF’s program promotes diversity in the workplace and helps connect the advertising industry to higher education, allowing companies to recruit employees from the nation’s top multicultural college seniors.
When Madison Lawson shops at a retail store, she tends to leave empty-handed. “I want to dress like any 22-year-old girl,” Lawson said. “But I have to constantly be reminded that I am different.”

Lawson is an MU student with a rare form of muscular dystrophy. Because she uses a wheelchair, she spends her days in a seated position. She said many clothing pieces don’t look good that way.

MU's Textile and Apparel Management program organized an adaptive clothing symposium on Tuesday. Panelists from companies like Cotton, Inc. and NBZ Apparel discussed clothing barriers to people with disabilities, as well as what they are doing to make the fashion industry more inclusive.

“We want everyone to have the shopping experience where they get excited about buying clothes,” said William Herron, the Marketing Director of NBZ Apparel.

Lawson said she thinks the industry is moving in a positive direction.
“Especially with the explosion of social media, more people with disabilities are being seen on bigger platforms,” Lawson said. “It’s becoming more of a normalized thing.”

Recently, Lawson had the opportunity to be on a big platform herself. She was featured in a campaign for Pretty Little Thing, which launched on International Women’s Day on March 8. Lawson said the brand reached out to her on Instagram after seeing her articles in Teen Vogue.

“There’s always that fear of ‘oh, what if they just want me because I’m in a wheelchair?’” Lawson said. “But to know it’s something I did, and that’s how they discovered me, was just so rewarding.”

Lawson said the brand asked her to fly out to Los Angeles with less than 24 hours notice, which she initially didn’t think was possible.

“There are so many things that I have to consider,” Lawson said. “I have to find somebody that can drop their entire life and go with me. I have to rent a portable oxygen concentrator than can be available tomorrow. I have to get doctor’s notes and things for my wheelchair to be able to fly on the plane.”

However, she said the “universe aligned” for her. She was able to get everything together and attend the shoot.

Now that the campaign has launched, Lawson said the feedback has been rewarding.

“Being featured in that ad has made so many different girls all over the world reach out to me and say, ‘oh my gosh, I saw somebody that looked like me on this ad!’” Lawson said. Lawson said she looks forward to the day when inclusive clothing is mainstream, rather than a novelty.

“If you choose to be inclusive, then you’re choosing to succeed in the future,” Lawson said. “The future is accessible.”

Story originally appeared on KOMU
In the heat of the 2019 U.S. Midterm Elections, former first lady Michelle Obama gave a surprise shout-out to Boone County, Missouri. “There were families struggling to get their families the mental health care they needed,” Obama said, while campaigning. “Those folks in Boone County could have just sat back and said, ‘Oh my God, this is awful. Our kids aren’t being treated well, what a shame. Everything feels so hopeless.’ But they realized that the only way to make change in this country is to get out and vote for the change you’re looking for.”

Inside M.U.’s School of Social Work, Obama’s endorsement was yet another sign that its nascent foray into the community was paying off big. Sure, the county’s 2012 passing of a quarter-cent sales tax (or some $7 million annually) for the Children Services Fund, was a bold step in supporting area families psychiatric treatment, counseling, or emergency shelter. But as local political leaders struggle for longer-term solutions for deeper, more intractable social challenges, many of which disproportionately impact communities of color — whether its untreated mental illness, to school-to-prison pipeline, or a clogged court system — public officials are increasingly relying on SSW’s team of clinicians and researchers for practical expertise, data and programs models.

Just ask Janet Thompson, Boone County Commissioner. Thompson likes to boast that she has SSW associate professor Kelli Canada on speed dial. Canada, a Robert Woods Johnson Fellow and expert on intervention and treatment on underserved and marginalized populations, is also co-founder of the widely-praised Integrative Behavioral Health Clinic. Since 2014, the IBHC, in collaboration with MedZou, has provided free behavioral health services to uninsured or underinsured residents in Columbia and across the state.

Canada says the program’s immersive hands-on approach, the “Missouri Method” as she puts it, has proven valuable as not only for training and research, but as a resource for shaping programs and policies for community agencies. Indeed, since the program’s inception, graduate students, supervised by licensed clinical social workers, have served more than 250 state residents — clients who report high levels of satisfaction about the quality of their treatment. “The need here is big,” Canada says. “Right now, our wait list is probably seven weeks, with so many people not able to get care in other places.”

As Thompson puts it: “We’re not atypical. The national average, in terms of untreated mental health issues, is at least 40%. And when mental illness goes untreated, that child or adult doesn’t have the opportunity to reach their full potential. Kelli helps us formulate an approach to getting the care we need.” She adds: “She’s like a one-stop shop. As an insider, she can bring more people to the table than we can.”

More often than not, one of those people is Canada’s own SSW colleague Aaron Thompson, an associate professor and director of the MU-sponsored Family Access Center of Boone County, or FACE as it’s known. FACE, founded in 2016, works as a liaison between public agencies and programs, coordinating such community services as counseling, mental health screening, substance abuse treatment. Housed in a 4,000 square-foot in downtown Columbia, FACE develops comprehensive “action plans” for families and kids from birth to age 19, to help them better navigate obstacles at home, school, and their community, FACE’s footprint is wide, as its board taps leaders from critical agencies in education, law enforcement and various social services.

In many cases, we’re throwing these kids into juvenile justice system because they were expressing mental health issues. Some of them are just super-stressed and not dealing well. If you’re an African American male in this county, the school-to-prison pipeline is out there waiting for you. We’ve really got to change that.

Janet Thompson
Boone County Commissioner

“One of our main roles is to try and find key stressors that families have and to try and eliminate them.” Aaron Thompson says. “Treating kids without treating the families is always an automatic failure.”

The good news, Thompson says, is that successful intervention, whether it’s family counseling or substance abuse treatment, can frequently translate into reducing the flow of adolescents — kids of color, mostly — into the county’s juvenile system. In Columbia, for example, African American males have 7.7 times more contact with police than their white counterparts, a higher rate than such larger cities as St. Louis, Kansas City and Springfield.

“In many cases, we’re throwing these kids into juvenile justice system because they were expressing mental health issues,” Thompson says. “Some of them are just super-stressed and not dealing well. If you’re an African American male in this county, the school-to-prison pipeline is out there waiting for you. We’ve really got to change that.”

Commissioner Thompson says she is optimistic: “My job is identify issues in the community, a method for addressing them, and finding the resources to make it happen,” Janet Thompson says. “Today, we have a collaborative atmosphere with the university that we’ve never had before. Sure, they’re getting good research, but that’s not why they’re doing it. They are doing it to help our community.”

10 IDENTIFY Spring 2019
A core component of the new center is the recently established minor in criminology/criminal and juvenile justice at MU. Students who choose this minor will have a core foundation in understanding the justice system in America.

“Students are interested in criminal justice, but until now there wasn’t an option at MU to meet their needs,” Canada said. “This minor will help prepare students for careers in the criminal justice system while also providing them with an understanding of systemic racism, behavioral health and social justice.”

Through interdisciplinary research efforts, the center hopes to tackle issues such as violence prevention, mental health, substance use and juvenile justice. Currently, the center’s work includes the Boone County Violence Prevention Project, a research effort to enhance knowledge and skills about the impacts of trauma exposure on young people in elementary school facing disciplinary action. This project is funded by the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation.

“The justice system is bigger than just the courts and jails — it’s our schools and communities,” Peters said. “Through the research and training that will come from this center, we can take a holistic approach to reforming justice systems.”

Social Work researchers establish new center, academic minor to study criminal justice policies

Story by SHEENA RICE

Across the country, families and lawmakers are demanding criminal justice reforms so systems can better serve communities in cost-effective ways. Now, a new center at the University of Missouri will bring together a diverse group of researchers, community stakeholders and students dedicated to criminal justice policy.

The newly established Center on Criminal and Juvenile Justice Priorities was founded by Kelli Canada and Clark Peters, associate professors in the MU School of Social Work and leading justice scholars. The goal of the center is to bring Mizzou to the forefront of issues of national importance, they said.

“This center, the first of its kind in Missouri, is filling a real need in the state and Midwest,” Canada said. “Throughout Missouri, many researchers and community organizations are interested in criminal justice interventions, yet there hasn’t been a central place where someone could find research and educational resources associated with the justice system.”

Other MU faculty members who will work with the center include Eileen Avery, associate professor of sociology; Anne Dannerbeck-Janku, associate research professor of social work; Ashley Givens, assistant professor of social work; Dan Hanneken, instructor of social work; Kathleen Preble, assistant professor of social work; David Ruggeri, associate teaching professor of health sciences; Aaron Thompson, associate professor of social work; and Sarah Myers Tlapek, assistant professor of social work. Beth Huebner, professor of social work at University of Missouri – St. Louis, also is involved with the center.

The School of Social Work is in the MU College of Human Environmental Sciences. Peters also has appointments in the MU Truman School of Public Affairs and MU School of Law.
One night in 1968, a black couple in Chicago spent the night in their beauty parlor with guns at their side. They watched as the city fell into chaos around them after the death of Martin Luther King Jr.

If they didn’t keep watch, the couple feared their business would go up in flames.

For Don Day, who met the couple years later in Columbia, the story came as a surprise.

“We had known them for a long time, and we have just recently started talking about these issues,” said Day, chair of the mission outreach ministry at Broadway Christian Church. “They had never mentioned anything before. We were just good friends.”

The conversation emerged after Day coordinated a series of book studies last year called “Critical Conversations in Troubled Times.” The idea started after racially tense events happened in Charlottesville, Ferguson and on campus at the University of Missouri, and Day wanted to be able to discuss the problems and see what could be done. The discussion soon spread to other churches, and they felt the same way.

The discussions around the book “America’s Original Sin” by Jim Wallis united 14 churches in Columbia and included 140 people of different races and ethnicities. That is when the couple shared their experiences in Chicago.

Several groups met weekly, biweekly or monthly to talk about divisive racial issues. The goal was to create an avenue for respectful, open conversation and reveal how America still struggles with racism.

“Even though we’ve come a long way in some ways, there is still a lot of inequity,” said Day’s wife, Fran.

Topics included white privilege, white supremacy and the ways racism affects Columbia. Black members would often share their own stories, revealing personal encounters with racism over a lifetime.

The stories often opened participants’ eyes to racial problems they hadn’t really understood. Day remembers a young white woman who broke down crying during one of the discussions about white privilege.

“I don’t think a lot of us realized what white privilege was,” Fran Day said. “And we do have privilege.”

Perspectives changed over time as the groups learned about themselves and their community. Day discovered the history of Sharp End, a section of downtown where many black businesses were located. Under urban renewal, most of those buildings were torn down, putting their owners out of business.
“Most of us thought urban renewal was a good thing at the time,” Day said. “Maybe it was, but just for white people.”

Both Don and his wife grew up during the Civil Rights movement. Don was raised in Maryville, Missouri, a town that was primarily white. Although they knew about Martin Luther King Jr. and the bus boycotts, Day said their knowledge was limited.

“It wasn’t in any of our history books,” he said, laughing. “But then again, I guess it hadn’t happened yet.”

Day does remember curfews in Maryville for blacks, the so-called Sundown Laws. But he knew just one black student in college at MU.

Similarly, his wife remembers a family trip to the South where separate bathrooms and water fountains had been assigned. She said her school wasn’t integrated until she was in the seventh grade.

Although these events were happening around them, the Days said they were not exposed to other races and didn’t involve themselves with what was going on.

“We heard it on the news but it didn’t affect us, so we just went on our merry way,” Fran Day said.

What changed for the couple was learning about the black community and their experiences.

“I think part of it is getting acquainted with people of other races and hearing their stories,” Day said.

This past November, a mixed group of 27 members from the book discussions, including the Days, took a civil rights pilgrimage to the sites of historical events, including those in Memphis and Birmingham. They say the trip strengthened the relationships among those who went and their understanding of civil rights.

Day says he hopes the momentum of the discussion groups will keep going and he added there is a desire for more discussion groups and pilgrimages.

“One of the ideas that came out the pilgrimage and the book discussion was to have our own pilgrimage in Boone County,” Day said. “There were a lot of events that happened here.”

He said he hopes that by continuing the conversation, the future can begin to be filled with more understanding and equality.

“All of this leads to realizing that things aren’t the way they should be,” he said.
Stories about the Sharp End black business community in Columbia take James Whitt back to his childhood in Fort Wayne, Indiana.

He makes an instant connection to prosperous black businesses in Columbia and those in his hometown.

“We had our small black business community that thrived when I was growing up,” Whitt remembered. “I was too young to go to most of these businesses, but I would always hear stories about them.”

Columbia’s Sharp End vanished during the ‘50s and ‘60s; the black business community in Fort Wayne did too. All that is left are the anecdotes.

“The experience we had with our black business community is something that happened all around the country, and it left a bitter taste in the mouths of black people,” said Whitt, who moved to Columbia in 2001 and became involved here, spending 10 years on Columbia’s School Board.

Whitt became chairman of the Sharp End Heritage Committee in 2016. So far, the committee has marked several Sharp End business locations with historical plaques, part of an ongoing project Whitt oversees called the African-American Heritage Trail. The purpose is to celebrate the contributions of about 30 former black businesses and individuals. Whitt said the African-American trail should be ready sometime this spring.

“Thereir stories, along with what happened to the Sharp End, must be known so that, as a community, we don’t make the same mistakes in the future,” he said.

Also in 2016, he took on a job as coordinator of the supplier diversity program for the city. Once again, a simple conversation led to the creation of the position.

Whitt serves as a resource to help add women- and minority-owned businesses to Columbia. One of his main functions is holding one-on-one consultations with business owners and entrepreneurs to point them in the right direction for success.
Sarahbella Bubbers toured several campuses during her college search. She wanted a big student body with lots of school spirit, a place that felt vibrant and exciting. As she walked around Mizzou’s campus, she thought she’d found that place. But, as with all the other schools she’d looked at, she had one more question to ask: Did they offer the disability services she needed?

“The person at the MU Disability Center is one of the strong reasons why I came here,” says Bubbers, now a senior in communication and psychology in the College of Arts and Science.

Bubbers has low vision and night blindness. She has used the Disability Center throughout her time at Mizzou to get large-print textbooks and other necessary accommodations that remove barriers to her full participation in class and campus life.

She has made the most of her opportunities on campus. In addition to joining the Alpha Phi sorority, Bubbers has been an Involvement Ambassador, a member of a Columbia nonprofit called Puppies With Purpose and an executive member of Tiger’s Lair. She also studied abroad as part of the Semester at Sea program through the MU International Center.

That involvement paid off last year when Bubbers won the Missouri Student Unions/U.S. Bank Students With Disabilities scholarship, offered through the Disability Center.

“It has definitely helped with paying for school,” says Bubbers, from Bettendorf, Iowa. “This helps offset being from out-of-state.”

Bubbers expects to graduate in May.

“I might not have the best vision,” she says, “but I have now seen more of the world than 95 percent of people, and I won’t let it stop me from doing anything that I want to do in the future.”

Anthony Conway is one of them. He worked in several jobs over the past four years, including as a custodian at Lafferre Hall at MU. His dream, though, was to own a used-car dealership. After working with Whitt for a year and a half, Conway decided to resign from MU when the infrastructure for his dealership was in place and focus fully on his new business.

“I don’t think opening the business would have been possible without Mr. Whitt. He’s been my mentor throughout the process,” Conway said. “He has a big heart, and he has provided me with information, resources, and his time which have been vital along the way.

“You can’t put a value on someone like Mr. Whitt.”

Managing both roles is a challenge for Whitt, but he said being involved with the community while taking advantage of his deep understanding of the business world is rewarding.

“Sometimes it’s about sitting down and talking to people to understand what they’re going through and providing a helping hand whenever you’re there,” he said.

Whitt’s trajectory in the business world includes working at General Electric for 23 years, starting his own business and creating a nonprofit organization that supports youth basketball. He grew up in Fort Wayne in a large household with eight siblings. His father established his own church there, and his mother worked at a hospital before dedicating her life to her children.

Growing up, Whitt’s main interests were religion and playing sports, mainly basketball, which he also played in college. He graduated with a bachelor’s degree from Indiana Institute of Technology and later earned a master’s in business administration from Indiana University.

His wife, Annelle Whitt, is also deeply involved in public life as the district coordinator for the MAC Scholars program in the Columbia Public Schools.

James Whitt will step down from the School Board in April but will continue his other civic responsibilities. His dual role will keep him in the position of planning for the future of minority businesses in Columbia while cementing their place in the history of the community.

For now, Whitt, 72, shows no signs of slowing down. He says that the hard work and learning that comes with leadership helps his mind stay active and “keeps him young.”

“I have never thought about stopping,” Whitt said. “As long as I have something to give back to the community I will continue to do everything that I can.”

Story by SARAH SABATKE
Photo by SAM O’KEEFE
Irene Juzkiw was 26 years old and working at the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign in 1978 when she received a call from the University of Missouri that would change her life. She was asked to interview to establish an intensive English language program for international students on MU’s campus. Juzkiw would go on to commit her career to advancing international student education at MU for the next four decades.

“Working with international students is like travelling internationally,” said Juzkiw, who serves as senior associate director of the Center for English Language Learning and the director of the English Language Support Program. “It’s making a difference in the world and touching someone’s life.”

Something Juzkiw encourages all international students to do is to practice their English language learning from the classroom out in the community.

“One of my favorite stories is of two students who came up with the idea together to interview people about Homecoming,” Juzkiw said. “They did the project for fun and asked other students why they were excited for the festivities. It’s great to see students use their English skills like that to meet new people.”

Growing up with her family that had recently immigrated to America from Ukraine taught Juzkiw firsthand the struggles of language barriers and inspired her value of being able to communicate clearly and accurately. She has been able to pass on hard-earned lessons to thousands of international students, like concentrating on language as a guide for further education and cultivating English skills to gain success.

As a first-generation college student, Juzkiw earned her bachelor’s degree at Bradley University and went on to earn her master’s degree in teaching English as a second language at the University of Illinois. She came to MU at a young age but with a deep understanding of the value of English skills and higher education.

Juzkiw has touched thousands of students’ lives being a teacher, advisor and administrator. She cherishes the opportunity to work both with international students and her colleagues in her role. Juzkiw has seen plenty of ups and downs with her longtime career, but most recently has gained success alongside her colleagues with the accreditation of the Intensive English Program from the Commission on English Accreditation. And after 40 years working to increase the international student population at MU, Juzkiw does not have plans to retire anytime soon but to continue doing what she is passionate about.

“I’m still doing what I was 40 years ago, and I still love it,” Juzkiw said.

As a testament to her esteemed career, Juzkiw has been honored with the MU International Engagement Award this year. This award recognizes faculty, staff and students who demonstrate meaningful and sustained commitments to international initiatives on behalf of the university.
**MAKING MOVES**

**A DEFINING MOMENT**

MU researchers find that children with autism are more susceptible to visual distraction at specific ages

Story by ERIC STANN

The ability to block out the noise and focus on a specific task is a crucial skill in daily life. Now, researchers at the University of Missouri have found that early childhood, before the age of 10, represents a critical time when children with autism have particular difficulty with this ability and would benefit from intervention addressing this weakness.

Shawn Christ (above), an associate professor of psychological sciences in the MU College of Arts and Science, and his team saw in previous studies that younger children with autism had more difficulty with visual distractions as compared to their same-aged peers without autism. This impairment was not observed for older adolescents and adults with autism. In the current study, the team was able to narrow the age range and confirm the previous findings.

“Here is a cognitive difficulty that is more apparent during one age than another,” Christ said. “Now we can say there is a time period when these children may benefit from an intervention that focuses on accommodating or helping them overcome this difficulty. This could have a significant impact on their academic and social success. They may not need that same intervention later on in life.”

“In our studies, we have observed differences in filtering ability between children with and without autism at younger ages such as 8-10 years old,” Christ said. “This is the time when kids are starting with more advanced topics in school, and can be a very difficult time for a child with filtering difficulties. It could be disrupting their ability to comprehend reading and affecting other kinds of skills, such as math. But the difficulty is not with reading or math, it’s a difficulty with attention and inhibitory control, and there are ways to overcome that.”

Researchers suggest simple interventions to help children overcome this difficulty such as using a reading window on a page that blocks the visual distraction of the other words, making a quiet room available at school to accomplish tasks, or minimizing visual distractions at home.

Christ and his team look to continue this research in a future study involving reading comprehension tests as well as a future study using an MRI at the MU Brain Imaging Center to measure patterns of brain activation in children with and without autism.

The study, “Brief Report: Flanker Visual Filtering Ability in Older Adolescents with Autism Spectrum Disorder,” was published in the Journal of Autism and Developmental Disorders. Christ is also the director of the MU Brain Imaging Center. Kelly Boland, Janine Stichter and David Beversdorf at MU co-authored the study. Boland is a graduate student in psychological sciences. Stichter is with the Thompson Center for Autism & Neurodevelopmental Disorders and a professor of special education. Beversdorf is with the Thompson Center for Autism & Neurodevelopmental Disorders and is an associate professor radiology, neurology and psychological sciences.

Funding for this study was provided by a grant from the University of Missouri Research Board, Autism Speaks (#2718), and the MU Thompson Center Scholar Program. The content is solely the responsibility of the authors and does not necessarily represent the official views of the funding agencies.

**Researchers presented 80 adolescents, ages 11 to 20, with a visual filtering task. Participants were asked to respond as quickly as possible to a visual target while ignoring visual distractions close to the target’s location. Of the 80 participants in the study, 36 had autism.**

**Flanker Visual Filtering Task**

**Compatible Trial**

**Incompatible Trial**

Task Instructions: “Press the left button if the center fish is facing to the left. Press the right button if it’s facing to the right.”
New Mizzou Wheelchair Basketball player Colin Higgins has found a home on the hardwood.

Story by MARIANNA MOORE
Photos by SAM O’KEEFE

Colin Higgins had always been a hockey player. But at age 22, he had an injury that severed his peroneal nerve, causing “drop foot,” a difficulty or inability to lift the front part of your foot, often causing it to drag when you walk.

Young and athletic, Higgins, from Rothesay, New Brunswick, in Canada, was at a loss. A friend of his mother’s introduced him to wheelchair basketball.

“Soon as I tried — fell in love with the sport. Felt like myself again,” Higgins says. “I’ve traveled around the world playing it, and it’s led me here to further my education.”

A sports management major in the College of Agriculture, Food and Natural Resources, Higgins also appreciates that Mizzou is well regarded not just for its wheelchair basketball program but also its academics. “It’s the best of both worlds,” he says.

The team competed at the national tournament from March 14-16 at Champaign, Illinois.

Higgins is a forward on the Mizzou Wheelchair Basketball team and prides himself on bringing energy and a defensive presence. He also gives a lot of credit to his coaches.

“I chose to come to Mizzou because I know Ron Lykins is a world-class coach,” he says. “One of the biggest things I’ve learned from the coaching staff so far this year is that no detail is too small.”

Before his injury, Higgins had been dismissive of wheelchair basketball. Once he started playing, though, he quickly learned what he’d been missing.

“I fell in love with it,” he says. “It’s fast, it’s physical.”


Higgins likes Mizzou’s chances moving forward.

“I’m not afraid to say, we expect to win a couple national championships,” he says.
Hypertension, also known as high blood pressure, is a major health concern worldwide, affecting an estimated 31 percent of the world’s population. Low and middle-income countries, such as the Dominican Republic, are disproportionately affected.

To help combat this issue, researchers at the University of Missouri partnered with the Dominican Light a Candle Foundation, Kansas City non-profit Dominican Republic Medical Partnership and American non-profit Jonas Philanthropies to pilot a hypertension care program in underserved communities of Haitian immigrants in the Dominican Republic. So far, the results of this program indicate that it is both effective and sustainable.

“Communities of migrant workers in the Dominican Republic have limited access to health care and healthy food, and so they end up eating lots of sugar and salt, which increases their risk of cardiac issues,” said Maithe Enriquez, an associate professor and director of the Participatory Health Research Graduate Certificate Program at MU’s Sinclair School of Nursing. “We coordinated with local communities to bring these people free screenings and treatment.”

This program, known as the Jonas Batey Hypertension Program, brought care to four bateyes, which are rural sugarcane settlements that often lack running water, electricity, proper sanitation and convenient access to health clinics or medication. The local foundation visited each community four times per year, providing screenings, multivitamins and a three-month supply of blood pressure medication to those in need at each visit. Though the program is still ongoing, it was evaluated by Enriquez and her colleagues after a one-year period.

The evaluation showed that among 813 participants who had participated in the program continuously for at least one year, 243 were diagnosed with hypertension and treated. Median systolic blood pressure readings dropped by more than 12 points, while diastolic blood pressure dropped by more than 15 points. Crucially, researchers noted a high level of engagement and continuous participation within the bateyes, indicating that the program is viable and can be expanded (since the analysis, six additional bateyes have been added to the program).

“Given that one of the major challenges these rural communities face is consistent, uninterrupted treatment for health conditions, we are happy to see that this program was able to serve patients continuously and effectively,” Enriquez said. “There were challenges, of course — we had to increase the supply of pills from 90 to 95 days’ worth, because heavy rains and washed out roads could lead to delays in reaching the bateyes — but we now know that this a robust program that can truly help people.”

The study, “The Jonas Hypertension Program: An academic-community partnership to address hypertension in four Dominican bateyes,” was published in Hispanic Health Care International. Others involved in the study were: Tammie Conley and Benjamin Coe of MU; An-Lin Cheng of the University of Missouri-Kansas City; Dorcas Jorge and Sandy Yan Meristal of the Light a Candle Foundation; and Pamela Logan, Steven Stiles, Ginny Beall, Alfred Biggs, and David McKinsey of the Dominican Republic Medical Partnership. Funding was provided by Jonas Philanthropies.
It’s a time of deepening political divisions in the United States, with people on opposite ends of the political spectrum not only disagreeing but many really disliking the other side. That dislike has been growing for decades. In the midst of all that division and dislike, there are growing calls for civility. One poll shows that a majority of Americans say incivility is a major problem. And an NPR/PBS NewsHour/Marist poll says that the country’s civility crisis is deepening and that a majority of Americans fear it will lead to violence.

But what does civility actually mean? It’s sometimes defined as simply being polite. It comes from the Latin root civilis, meaning “befitting a citizen.” It’s a term that’s a comfort to some and repressive to others. And while, yes, it can refer to politeness, it’s much more than that.

“Civility is the baseline of respect that we owe one another in public life,” says Keith Bybee, the author of How Civility Works. “And when people talk about a crisis in civility, they usually are reporting their sense that there is not a shared understanding of what that baseline of respect ought to be.”

Right now that social contract — a common agreement on what appropriate public behavior looks like and who deserves respect — feels broken. No one can agree on the facts, let alone on how to argue or what to argue about. With a president who uses terms like “loser,” “dumb as a rock” and “fat pig” to describe his critics and “animals” to describe undocumented immigrants, it feels like the tone for nasty behavior that’s seeping into everyday life is being set in Washington.

Some blame the Democrats, others the media — and many blame President Trump.

For some, this deep sense of division and dislike spells out danger. What’s at stake?

“The success of the country,” says Jonathan Haidt, a social psychologist at New York University’s Stern School of Business. “When we don’t trust each other, that means it’s very difficult for politicians to compromise. It’s very difficult to find win-win solutions or positive-sum games. And so there are so many problems that we could solve,” but we don’t.

“We become credulous, we become easily manipulated by our foreign enemies and our democracy becomes what? A beacon to the world as to what not to do,” he says.

The arrival of social media didn’t help, Haidt says. He sees it as an accelerant to spew outrage and anger faster and further into the world. It’s a tool that has empowered the powerless to topple dictators, but it’s also one that is used to manipulate, deceive and, well, be horrible to people online anonymously.

But the United States has survived even more divided times in the past — from the country’s founding to the Civil War, the civil rights movement and the Vietnam War.

Not only did the country endure, but sometimes the outcome of all the so-called incivility was a rewriting of that social contract to make it more inclusive of people who were discounted and dismissed in the past.

“When you have people whose behavior runs squarely smack dab into conflict with some prevailing consensus about what constitutes appropriate conduct, those are the people that are castigated as being insufferably rude,” the author Bybee says. “I mean, this was a criticism made of the civil rights movement in the middle of the 20th century when you had these lunch counter sit-ins, which were a way of seeking legislative change.”

At the time, those sit-ins were dismissed, he says, as an “affront to racial etiquette.” In the late 1800s and early 1900s,

“Civility has been about making sure that the status quo, the hierarchy of the status quo at the moment, which means racial inequality, gender inequality, class inequality, stays permanent,” says Lynn Itagaki, an associate professor at the University of Missouri who writes on what she calls civil racism. She defines it as maintaining civility at the expense of racial equality.

It’s a fraught term, she says. It carries the echoes of that historical and bigoted definition of the civilized versus the savage.

Maybe this moment feels like a crisis, Itagaki says, but when people call for a restoration of civility, who gets to define it? Who gets to rewrite the social contract?

Right now hate crimes and hate groups are on the rise. The Southern Poverty Law Center blames the president for stirring fears about a country that is becoming less white and for sparking an immigration debate with racial overtones.

The calls for civility can feel like an effort to stifle people’s outrage over injustice or hate, because civility can be a tool to build or a weapon to silence.

“To what purpose is civility going to be used? Is it going to be more inclusive?” Itagaki asks. “Is it going to mean that you’re bringing more people’s voices into the political debates, or are you using civility as a way to go back to the old hierarchies and the status quo since the founding of the American republic, where you only had white male propertied free landowners who were able to vote?”

So for some, now is a time to take a step back and be civil to each other. For others, it’s imperative to be uncivil in a way that has led to social justice in the past.

Finding the perfect outfit is a struggle for anyone. For Skyler Chadwick, an 11-year-old who lives with Ehlers-Danlos syndrome, a sensory processing disorder and amplified pain syndrome, it can be almost impossible.

MU’s department of Textile and Apparel Management facilitated a discussion Tuesday between fashion companies that design clothes for people with disabilities and the people they are serving.

About 80 people filled Jesse Wrench Auditorium to learn how to serve often overlooked communities and to better design adaptive apparel for the varying needs of different people living with disabilities.

The problem, however, is broader than the functionality of clothing. Skyler, who spoke at the Design For Disability forum with his mother, said it can be difficult to find clothes that work for him that he also enjoys wearing. He can’t always wear the clothes that he likes — graphic T-shirts with images from his favorite video games, television shows and movies — because of the way the logos and graphics are applied to the shirt.

“It really makes it feel weird and doesn’t work with sensory issues,” he said.

His mother, Kate Chadwick, said that the clothes he’s comfortable wearing have changed over time. When he was younger, he was only comfortable in tight clothing like turtlenecks or leggings.

“As he got older and started to go through school, it became difficult because the only tight clothes came from the girl’s section,” she said. “The stuff from the boys section is always loose and baggy.”

However, Chadwick also said Skyler’s disorder is not linear — or predictable. As he got older, he became uncomfortable with any clothing touching his skin. Chadwick had to put together an entirely new wardrobe to meet her son’s needs.

She also found out that there is a high cost associated with apparel for people with disabilities. Skyler needs to wear special shoes that keep his foot at the correct angle. The shoes cost upward of $130, and it can be hard to justify the expense knowing that he will quickly outgrow them.

Balancing prices with product quality is a goal for inclusive-design company NBZ Apparel.

“We want to have a self-sustaining business,” said William Herron, a spokesperson for the company. “It is hard to balance that. We do our best to keep our pricing affordable.”

Herron also said that it’s important to design clothing that allows people living with disabilities to express themselves in the same way that able-bodied people do.

“When you go into your closet and you’re grabbing clothing, that clothing says something about you,” Herron said. “That’s your identity and your image, especially with veterans and other people with disabilities. You want to get that identity back.”

Herron said that standard clothing designs are taken for granted by the majority of the population living without disabilities.

Chuck Graham, who works at the Great Plains Americans with Disabilities Act Center at MU, said he suffered a broken spine in a car accident more than 35 years ago that left him paralyzed from the chest down.

As a professional, he said one of his biggest challenges is finding suit jackets that fit him properly and don’t drag or bunch up while he’s seated.

Graham also mentioned the little victories in finding clothing that makes his day-to-day life easier.

“It’s a lot of trial and error,” he said. “Once you find something, though, you’re going to be brand-loyal for a while because it works.”

Originally appeared on NPR

Identify Spring 2019
EVEN BUBBLY POP MUSIC CONTAINS LOTS OF VIOLENCE

Pop music lyrics contain the same amount of violent content as rap and hip-hop, research finds.

Unlike hip-hop and rap music, which get the bulk of public criticism for harsh lyrics, antagonistic lyrics in pop music might be harder for listeners to pinpoint. The researchers suggest that parents can help their children and teens unpack tricky lyrics by having discussions about what they hear on the radio.

“We know that music has a strong impact on young people and how they view their role in society,” says Cynthia Frisby, professor in the University of Missouri School of Journalism. “Unlike rap or hip-hop, pop music tends to have a bubbly, uplifting sound that is meant to draw listeners in. But that can be problematic if the lyrics beneath the sound are promoting violence and misogynistic behavior.”

A FEW EXAMPLES OF POPULAR POP SONGS THAT CONTAIN VEILED REFERENCES TO VIOLENCE OR SEXUAL BEHAVIOR INCLUDE:

◆ “Love the Way You Lie” by Eminem and Rihanna. The song has themes of domestic abuse and violent behavior in retaliation.

◆ “Wake Up Call” by Maroon 5. The song tells the story of a man shooting his girlfriend’s lover after finding them together.

◆ “Hollaback Girl” by Gwen Stefani. Fans of this popular track from 2004 might be surprised to know the song is actually about a physical fight between girls on a track at school.

Frisby and Elizabeth Behm-Morawitz, an associate professor and assistant vice provost for graduate and postdoctoral affairs in the University of Missouri’s Office of Graduate Studies, analyzed the lyrics of more than 400 top Billboard songs that came out between the years of 2006 to 2016 for themes of violence, profanity, misogyny, and gender-role references. The songs represented a wide array of genres, including rap, hip hop, rock, pop, country, heavy metal, and R&B.

They found that while rap and hip-hop continue to lead in promoting profanity, violence, and misogyny, pop music promotes violence at a similar level. On the other hand, country music had the least amount of violent and misogynistic content. Frisby also found that nearly one-third of the popular songs contained references that degrade or demean women by portraying them as submissive or sexually objectified.

Frisby suggests that parents can help their children and teens unpack tricky lyrics in these songs by having discussions with them about what they are hearing and how their life choices do not need to match a celebrity’s choices.

“Ask your daughters and sons what songs they like to listen to and have conversations about how the songs might impact their identity,” Frisby says. “For example, many songs might make young girls feel like they have to look and act provocative in order to get a boy to like them, when that isn’t necessarily the case.

“If children and teens understand that what they are hearing isn’t healthy behavior, then they might be more likely to challenge what they hear on the radio.”

Story by CAILIN RILEY

Frisby and Elizabeth Behm-Morawitz, an associate professor and assistant vice provost for graduate and postdoctoral affairs in the University of Missouri’s Office of Graduate Studies, analyzed the lyrics of more than 400 top Billboard songs that came out between the years of 2006 to 2016 for themes of violence, profanity, misogyny, and gender-role references. The songs represented a wide array of genres, including rap, hip hop, rock, pop, country, heavy metal, and R&B.

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Study appears in Media Watch
Black history education is a fairly new concept in U.S. schools. In order to understand its development, let’s start from the beginning.

“History, when you think about it, it’s not just about facts. But history is about identity, right?” professor LaGarrett King, founder of the Missouri Carter Center for K-12 Black History Education. “It tells us who we are. It tells us about the other. It tells us where we’ve been. It tells us where we’re going. It tells us all these particular things about us and about other people.”

Black history education as we know it, as riddled as it is with errors and mischaracterizations, took centuries to make it into mainstream classrooms. Before that, the teaching of the topic was largely based on racist, Eurocentric narratives.

To better understand how it all changed, let’s start from the beginning — with some of the earliest American history textbooks, published in the 1800s.

This is a history textbook from 1832. It was written by Noah Webster — yes, that Webster— and one of the opening chapters describes the QUOTE “varieties of the human race” in undeniably racist detail.

To be more specific, the text literally describes groups of people like Hindus as “ugly,” “cowardly and effeminate,” but refers to Europeans as “the most distinguished variety of men.”

One Harvard researcher described Webster’s text as “distressingly typical” of the time. Because it was written three decades before the end of the Civil War, the book only described slavery in the context of policy and completely ignored the abolitionist movement. That decision wasn’t just an oversight. Webster really believed that Africans had “no history” and — you can see this from his writings — that history was centered on European colonizers and politicians.

“It was just part of kind of the racial climate during that time, right?” King says. “Education, particularly history, was used as a racial apparatus to continue to transmit notions of race, racial hierarchy and different aspects that told black people were like non human are subhuman, right? So history was used as a tool for those particular aspects.”

These white supremacist narratives continued for decades, even after the Civil War.

“So, for example, a book authored by [the name of] Sherman Williams in 1898 referenced this religious aspect, you know, teaching kids — this was a textbook — and there he said, ‘First God created the black man, realized he did poorly and started making man more lighter and lighter until he got it right. So, for the black man, he gave them a box of tools for the white man, he gave him pen and paper, so the black man can work for the white man for the rest of his life.’ So those were kind of the type of narratives that were in early traditional mainstream textbooks for children to learn,” King says.

To counter these racist narratives, black activists like Edward August Johnson, Leila Amos Pendleton and Booker T. Washington wrote black history textbooks to revise and disprove the racist characterizations that white writers made.

In 1915, historian Carter G. Woodson formed the Association for the Study of Negro Life to promote and preserve black history and culture. The group laid the foundation for black history curricula by writing textbooks, publishing the work of black academics and designing courses for teachers. Some of its lasting contributions to society include black history academic journals, and “Negro History Week” — the precursor to Black History Month.In 2018, Google celebrated Woodson as the “Father of Black History.” And he’s the namesake for the University of Missouri’s Carter Center for K-12 Black History Education — which has its work cut out for itself.

“During my time, you know, I’m 40 years old. And during that 40 year old phase, you still had textbooks that taught that black people were happy slaves. It didn’t really give agency to blackness, right? So, you know, those historical narratives are tough to kind of dismiss, or tough to recenter in our minds, because they’re ingrained in our psyche,” King says. “And, you know, when we add the media, you know, in terms of like movies, in terms of other social media sites that perpetrate those same particular narratives, it’s real hard to kind of approaching and move past kind of what we learned about history textbooks.”

Today, even though we’ve gotten rid of the obviously racist texts of Webster and Williams, black history education is still taught from a white, Eurocentric lens. Because of that, scholars like Professor King are working in Woodson’s footsteps — tackling the miseducation of black history one textbook at a time.
Sydney Alexander (senior, St. Louis), Hasan-El Amin (senior, St. Louis), and Jessica White (sophomore, Columbia) served as the inaugural Emerging Leaders Internship cohort. This two-day internship was awarded to Missouri high school students who attend the 2018 Emerging Leaders Conference at the University of Missouri and demonstrated outstanding leadership, communication, and critical-thinking skills. Under the sponsorship of MU and Rep. Daron McGee, Rep. Tommie Pierson Jr., and Steve Roberts, these three students received this competitive statewide internship. The objectives were to help Missouri high school students enhance their leadership, communication, and advocacy skills, as well as expose students to opportunities that enable them to collaborate in diverse environments.
Jelani Cobb focused on how historical racism has had an impact on how race is viewed in our current society during a lecture Wednesday evening on the MU campus.

Throughout his lecture, "The Half-Life of Freedom," Cobb related historical events to racism that exists in the U.S. today, such as the 2015 shooting of nine people at a church in Charleston, South Carolina, by white supremacist Dylann Roof, who was sentenced to death in 2017. The shooting is the subject of Cobb's next book, "Nine."

"There’s never been progress in this country, what we could conceive of as progress, without there being a huge degree of retrenchment and backlash," said Cobb, a 2018 Pulitzer Prize finalist.

The Diversity and Inclusion committee, along with other schools and departments across campus, sponsored the event held in Fisher Auditorium before an audience of about 50 people.

Cobb joined the faculty at Columbia University in 2016 and is the director of The Ira A. Lipman Center for Journalism and Civil and Human Rights. He has contributed to The New Yorker since 2012 and became a staff writer for the magazine in 2015, primarily covering race and politics.

His most recent book, "The Substance of Hope: Barack Obama and the Paradox of Progress," looks into the 2008 election of Barack Obama and how he won the vast majority of black votes in primaries across the U.S.

One MU senior, K’Imani Davis, 22, connected with Cobb’s idea that progress against racism is a continual process and often results in backlash against minorities.

"It goes back to just last year," she said. "It goes back to a hundred years. It goes back to a thousand years."

Cobb concluded his speech by saying people have a responsibility to recognize the humanity of others around them, especially those who have different social and cultural backgrounds. Respecting those people will help keep democracy successful, he said.

"If democracy will survive and if democracy will live is really in our hands," Cobb said.

Jelani Cobb speaks to students and faculty Wednesday in Fisher Auditorium on MU’s campus. Cobb is a writer for The New Yorker magazine and spoke about how racism and slavery have shaped American history.

NO PROGRESS WITHOUT ‘BACKLASH’: PULITZER FINALIST ON RACISM IN AMERICA

Story by CAMille McMAnus
Photo by ETHAN WESTON

Writer and educator Jelani Cobb focused on how historical racism has had an impact on how race is viewed in our current society during a lecture Wednesday evening on the MU campus.

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Story originally appeared in the Columbia Missourian
Activist Tererai Trent stressed the importance of universal women’s education and its potential world impact to a Columbia crowd Tuesday evening.

“When you educate a woman, she’ll come back to make a difference,” Trent said. “We are the solution.” Trent grew up in a cattle-herding family in rural Zimbabwe. The entrenched roles for women prevented her from pursuing a formal education. Trent was married with children by age 18. But using her brother’s school books, she taught herself to read and write.

She founded Tererai Trent International, which champions quality education for all children regardless of gender or socio-economic background. She’s appeared twice on “The Oprah Winfrey Show,” and Winfrey referred to Trent as her “all-time favorite guest.” Winfrey gave her $1.5 million to rebuild an elementary school in Trent’s hometown.

“We now have seven girls that graduated and are now going to university in Zimbabwe,” Trent said. “It’s all about tapping into the energy within us.”

Spurred by encouragement from her mother and advice from Jo Luck, then-president and CEO of the charity Heifer International, Trent came to the U.S. to seek an education. She went on to earn undergraduate and graduate degrees, including a doctorate from the College of Public Health at Western Michigan University. She is an adjunct professor in monitoring and evaluation in global health at Drexel University.

“She (Luck) never saw the poverty in me,” Trent said. “She never saw the marginalization in me. She saw a dream. She saw a champion in me. She saw something I wasn’t seeing in myself.”

Trent spoke to the large audience at the Missouri Theatre about her background and past in Zimbabwe and explained how it led to where she is now. In her speech, she used an extended metaphor of a baton in a relay race.

“I always visualized my great-grandmother, when she was born, she was born into this race that she never defined,” Trent said. “I’m going to call that race the race of poverty. And she was born holding the baton.”
In her speech, Trent said she wanted to redefine the baton so that she wouldn’t pass it along to her own daughters and that she draws daily motivation from the idea.

“I realized that I needed to give voice not only to my story but to give voice to women,” Trent said in an interview after her speech. “I think our stories, they have the potential to heal not only ourselves but also the listeners. Many have been silenced. They can’t even tell their stories, and I’m thinking by telling my own stories, by writing about the silencing of women, other women will find their own voices as well.”

Trent’s words resonated with Adedayo Akala, a junior at MU. Akala said the speech provided inspiration to continue her degree.

“She (Trent) said you can do anything you want, and I just realized I can do it,” she said. “If this woman can struggle for 20 years, I can struggle for four years.”

Trent emphasized the importance of persevering throughout her lecture.

“Never give up,” Trent said. “Believe in yourself because the power is in you. When we don’t let the past define us, the universe will always honor us.”

Trent’s most recent book, about her life’s journey, is called “The Awakened Woman: Remembering & Reigniting Our Sacred Dreams.” It won a 2018 NAACP Award for Outstanding Literary Work.

“If we give opportunities to women and girls, it’s the best investment any organization or institution could do, because whether you like it or not, women are going to change the world,” she said. “Because when we come together as women, it is our collective energy that’s going to move this world.”

Trent ended her speech by stressing the importance of working together for positive change.

“All things are done together,” she said. “All things are connected. See no boundaries. See no girls. See no women. See humanity and believe in our diversity and embrace and celebrate who we are.”

Tererai Trent visited MU in commemoration of International Women’s Day and in honor of Black History Month. Trent is one of today’s most internationally recognized voices for quality education and women’s empowerment. She grew up in Zimbabwe under colonial rule, working to provide universal access to quality education and developed partnerships with Oprah Winfrey.

“From left: Taylor Petska, Clayton Carter and Jose R. Calvo wait for the curtain to open Tuesday at the Missouri Theatre. At the end of the performance, the audience was invited onstage to join the musical group in celebration of International Women’s Day and Black History Month.”

“Jose R. Calvo plays the drums as part of the celebration. The theme for this year, ‘Think Equal, Build Smart, Innovate for Change,’ puts innovation by women and girls, for women and girls, at the heart of efforts to achieve gender equality according to the UN Women website.”

“Story originally appeared in the Columbia Missourian.”
A
n audience of about 130 people cheered as dancers dressed in traditional Indian clothing performed at the Global Showcase Saturday evening in MU’s Jesse Auditorium.

Ten artists and groups showcased 14 different performances at the event, which was sponsored by MU’s Campus Activities Programming Board.

The dancers in Indian costume were the Garba Queens, a dancing group composed of elementary school students, six girls and two boys. The group is lead by one of the dancer’s mothers, said dancer Vani Kumar.

This was the second year the Garba Queens performed in the showcase. The group had been practicing their performance for two months, but the dancers have been perfecting their craft for much longer.

“Our each of us has been dancing for a little more than two years,” said Kareena Puri, who performed with the Garba Queens. Puri has been dancing for four years.

In addition to dance, the showcase also featured two choirs: the Columbia Chinese Golden Voice Group and a group from the Columbia Chinese Language School.

Derek Yuande Li, 7, performed with the Columbia Chinese Language School. He said it was his second year singing for the showcase, and that he enjoyed getting to know other kids from other cultural backgrounds in the backstage.

Li’s mother, Xiao Heng, said Li was excited to demonstrate his own culture through the choir.

The Columbia Chinese Language School, a non-profit organization that offers weekend language classes, performed two acts for the showcase. In addition to the choir performance, the school also put together a fashion show of traditional Chinese women’s clothing.

Kyle Baughman, the moderator of the showcase, said the event aimed to highlight the various cultural origins of the Columbia community.

“It’s a good outreach program for the surrounding community,” Baughman said. “Most of our performers here tonight were not even Mizzou students, so it’s good to connect with the community both inside and outside Mizzou.”
The Midnight Dance Crew performs a remixed K-pop dance at the Global Showcase in Jesse Auditorium. K-pop has become a global sensation in both dance and music circles the past decade.

Smrita Dorairajan and Charunetha Murugesan perform the Paratanatia, a dance celebrating Krishna, a Hindu deity.

Shiting Chen performs a solo on the pipa, a four-stringed traditional Chinese instrument played by hand. The instrument is similar to a mandolin.

Jihwan Aum and Daniel Kim of the group Mere perform K-pop ballads at the Global Showcase.

Story originally appeared in the Columbia Missourian
The IDE Excellence Grant Initiative for Employees provides one-time funding for faculty or staff to creatively strengthen teaching; pedagogical practices; or research with inclusion, diversity and/or equity implications for our increasingly diverse community and student populations enrolled at MU.

The IDE Excellence Grant Initiative for Students provides one-time funding for undergraduate or graduate students to creatively strengthen research with inclusion, diversity, and/or equity implications for our increasingly diverse community and student populations enrolled at MU.

These are the projects that were selected from many outstanding applications for the 2019-20 academic year.

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# EARLY CAREER EXPLORATION AND ACADEMIC SUCCESS MODEL FOR UNDERSTANDING STUDENTS

Submitted by **FAROUK AGREBE AND DEVON WASHINGTON**

The Center for Academic Success & Excellence will implement a pilot program to decrease the time to graduation of underrepresented students by incorporating a career exploration course and the Guaranteed 4.0 Learning System to create a comprehensive educational intervention that supports early career exploration and academic success. This pilot will lead 35-50 students through a career exploration course the summer before their freshman year exploring their interests, values, abilities, majors at Mizzou and the world of work. Additionally, participants will engage in a six-hour “Guaranteed 4.0 workshop” and follow-up sessions which challenge students’ social pre-conditioning and provides tools to maximize class time, instructor engagement, knowledge acquisition, note-taking, reading retention, concept analysis and test taking for success in college and beyond.

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# THE UNIVERSITY AS A SITE OF MENTAL HEALTH PROMOTION: A SITUATIONAL ANALYSIS

Submitted by **KALEEA LEWIS**

The goal of my study is to begin the groundwork for the creation and implementation of a mental health promotion program that will support Black students at MU. I will explore how this predominately white institution (PWI) operates as a site of mental health promotion and what structural and institutional changes are necessary to more fully meet the mental health needs of MU’s Black students. Focus groups and individual in-depth interviews will be the main source of data collection for this study. Focus groups will be conducted with students and individual interviews will be conducted with faculty/staff. This study will use situational analysis in order to provide a better understanding of: (1) what services Black students want, (2) what services the university offers and how faculty/staff think about the university’s role in promoting positive mental health among Black students, (3) the role Black students see the university playing in promoting positive mental health, and (4) how students and faculty/staff can work together to implement structural change.
PROMOTING SOCIAL AWARENESS: INTERVENTION STRATEGIES TO ENHANCE MEDIA LITERACY

Submitted by ELIZABETH (LISSA) BEHM-MORAWITZ, PH.D., ASSISTANT VICE PROVOST FOR GRADUATE AND POSTDOCTORAL AFFAIRS

The goals of our project are to implement and assess the effectiveness of a media literacy intervention, centering on media diversity in relation to underrepresented and stigmatized identities. This project advances student learning as well as research centering on inclusion, diversity, and equity. We will test an innovative approach to incorporating media literacy lessons into existing courses offered at the undergraduate level on the Mizzou campus to increase students’ media literacy skills and their understanding of how media impact our constructions of identity and social group stereotypes. A team of undergraduate and graduate research assistants from the Media & Diversity Center in the Department of Communication are working with us on designing and assessing the intervention. The results of our work will advance research as well as have a broader impact on the Mizzou campus with the potential expansion of the intervention to a diversity of majors across campus.

DIRECT AND INDIRECT EFFECTS OF PERCEIVED THREAT AND DISCRIMINATION ON MENTAL AND BEHAVIORAL HEALTH OUTCOMES AMONG NON-MINORITY AND MINORITY STUDENTS

Submitted by JOY ROOS, MSW PHD STUDENT, AND GUSTAVO CARLO, PHD, MILLSAP PROFESSOR OF DIVERSITY AND MULTICULTURAL STUDIES

In the fall of 2018, the University of Missouri experienced a striking increase in minority student enrollment, introducing a pivotal opportunity to foster positive student interactions and a campus climate supportive of diversity. Prosocial behavior, or helping behavior, is a key marker of social and moral development and it facilitates quality social relationships. The goal of the current study is to further understand the mechanisms that can support or hinder prosocial behaviors between minority students and their non-minority peers. Furthermore, we will seek to understand how experiences of discrimination influence student mental health outcomes, how perceptions of threat influence an individual's empathy for another, and how both discrimination and threat may affect the extent to which students engage in prosocial behaviors toward students outside of their identity. The results will inform faculty, students, and staff at MU to further educate and raise awareness of diversity challenges and how to set the stage for a welcoming campus environment.
MATERNAL RISK, PARENTING, AND MOTHER-CHILD CONVERSATIONS IN LATINO/A AND AFRICAN AMERICAN FAMILIES

Submitted by GUSTAVO CARLO, PHD, MILLSAP PROFESSOR OF DIVERSITY AND MULTICULTURAL STUDIES

There is evidence that positive parent-child communication has important consequences for children's health. Yet for many families, it is a challenge to develop or maintain positive communication patterns as children of color living in poverty. We currently have a three-year, federally funded project designed to understand how these families can overcome these challenges and promote positive maternal-child communication. Our multidisciplinary, collaborative effort will examine these issues in Latino/a and African American mother-child dyads. We will recruit and train undergraduate students of color to transcribe and code for the quality of these dyadic conversations. These experiences will result in mentoring and training junior scientists, opportunities to disseminate study findings, and enhance their pursuit of graduate studies. We also expect that the study findings will have important implications for positive parenting intervention programs and policies aimed at ethnic/racial minority groups.

BLACK AND BROWN IN STEM AT MIZZOU (BBSM)

Submitted by TERRELL R. MORTON, PH.D. (EDUCATION), TOJAN RAHHAL, PH.D. (ENGINEERING) AND JOHANNES SCHUL, PH.D. (BIOLOGY)

Studies on Black students in postsecondary science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM) education suggest that environmental and individual influences inform retention and matriculation. BBSM is a research project designed to capture the perceptions and experiences of students who identify racially as Black (being of African ancestry) or Brown (being of Indigenous or Latinx ancestry) and are majoring in science, technology, engineering, or mathematics at MU. This study will produce a conceptual model, measures, and tools that can be implemented to transform institutional policies and faculty and staff practices.
Laying the Groundwork for Decolonized Education in CAFNR is an effort initiated by a partnership of Native and settler members of the University of Missouri who recognize an absence of Indigenous visibility and pedagogy at this institution. This project seeks to foreground Native voices and establish an infrastructure for allyship at MU by 1) initiating the formation of an Indigenous Advisory Board, 2) reframing a CAFNR course to highlight Traditional Ecological Knowledge, 3) developing an intercampus learning network and digital resources repository on decolonizing pedagogies, and 4) preparing representative CAFNR faculty and staff for diversity and inclusion in land-based disciplines by attending an Indigenous Farming Conference.

Exploring Black History through a High School and University Partnership

The main purpose of this grant is to develop curriculum for a high school Black History course that would be a partnership between the University of Missouri and Columbia Public Schools. Patterned as a combination between a dual enrollment and Advanced Placement (AP) class, this course would involve MU faculty (mainly from the Department of Black Studies) who would visit CPS schools to lecture and work with students. In addition, CPS students will attend activities and facilities on campus. While the main goal of this class would be to provide an excellent educational opportunity to CPS students, a central goal of this class would be to make the university a more familiar place to students of color from Columbia and to encourage them to apply/attend the University of Missouri.

As one (out of two) of the student projects to be accepted in this competitive grant process, I am particularly thankful to the Division of Inclusion, Diversity & Equity for supporting this project as well as the support that I’ve received from the College of Education, the Department of Learning, Teaching & Curriculum, and the CARTER Center for K-12 Black History Education for this project.

Developing Assessment and Administrative Practices to Support Minoritized Student Success

Through a collaborative effort between Drs. Marjorie Dorimé-Williams and Michael Steven Williams and the Center for Academic Success (CASE), a team of researchers and staff will implement a comprehensive planning and assessment framework to maximize the use of unit-level and institutional data to support minoritized student success. The mission of CASE is to support the retention and graduation of underrepresented students at the institution. It serves as an ideal area to focus on how assessment and data-informed decision making can contribute to more equitable student outcomes. The proposed study will examine longitudinal data and focus on using a critical lens to bridge theory and practice to promote substantive change and community development.
Whispers filled the room, first slowly, then stronger with each round.

Bree Newsome’s speech, hosted by MU during a week of Martin Luther King Jr. celebrations, did not start off with loud declarations. Rather, MLK Chair Ashley Woodson instructed the audience to close their eyes and think of their ancestors, people who had struggled for their basic freedoms. After a moment, she asked them to recite their names over and over again.

Newsome’s speech reflected this mindset of remembrance. She is an activist for racial equality and human rights, best known for removing the Confederate flag from South Carolina statehouse property. Newsome championed the past as a source of personal courage.

“Where would we be today if not for those who recognized what was at stake at the times in which they lived?” Newsome asked.

“Turmoil is an indication that the time is right for sowing the seeds of social change,” Newsome said.

Newsome tries to spread a message of nonviolent social activism, which she defined as a tactic that can be used in protest to draw a contrast between the justness of a cause and the injustice of a system or situation.

During a press conference, she emphasized the importance of sharing this message, particularly at this time of year when “we are really examining the life and legacy of Martin Luther King and what implications it has for today’s times.”

“He was calling upon us as a nation to not simply end segregation as a legal practice but to transform the entire way in which we are interacting with each other as human beings,”
Newsome said, “to recognize that so long as someone else is oppressed and exploited and their rights are being taken away, I can never really be free.”

She also offered her thoughts on the role of student activism, which played an important part in the 2015 resignations of former University of Missouri System President Tim Wolfe and former MU Chancellor R. Bowen Loftin.

“The role that students play in social change or have played in social change throughout history cannot be denied,” Newsome said. “If we are striving to have a democratic society that believes in the open exchange of ideas, then we have, to a certain extent, to at least support student activism on campus.”

Newsome’s most famous act of activism shocked the country on June 27, 2015, when she scaled a 30-foot flagpole. At the top of the pole, a Confederate flag was flying over the state Capitol in Columbia, South Carolina.

Ten days before, a 21-year-old white man, Dylann Roof, shot and killed nine black members of Emanuel African Episcopal Church in Charleston, South Carolina.

“You come against me with hatred and oppression and violence,” Newsome yelled from the top of the flagpole. “I come against you in the name of God. This flag comes down today.”

She cited the shooting as her reasoning for removing the flag, a long-standing symbol of racism, segregation and slavery.

Newsome detached the flag and, using climbing skills learned from an environmental activist, rappelled to police officers below.

Upon landing, Newsome and fellow activist James Tyson, who assisted in her climb, were arrested for defacing a state monument. It was an offense punishable by a maximum of three years in jail and $5,000.

The charges were later dropped, and the flag was removed from the statehouse lawn.

Newsome has since received much recognition for her activism. In 2016, she was awarded the NAACP Image Award — Chairman’s Award. Previous recipients include Janet Jackson, Maxine Waters and Barack Obama.

The same year, she also received the Rainbow Push Coalition Powerful Women in Leadership award, was named to the Root 100 and Ebony 100 and participated in Stories that Shaped a Nation, an awareness campaign for icons of the women and civil rights movements by the Library of Congress.

Newsome has been working as an activist for about six years. She first participated in Moral Monday, a civil rights movement led by the state NAACP president in North Carolina and later in student and youth organizing.

However, it was the act of removing the Confederate flag that gained her national recognition. She began receiving invitations to speak across the country.

Toward the end of her speech at MU, Newsome remarked on how long people have been fighting for racial justice and equality. Calling it a “multigenerational” movement, she said she might never see the end of her work, just as other civil rights activists have lived and died without a true solution.

That struck a chord with MU’s NAACP chapter Treasurer Fatima Adedokun.

“The problems are still going to be here tomorrow, unfortunately,” she said, “but we still have to fight for it for the greater good.”

Story originally appeared in the Columbia Missourian
UM System President Mun Choi poses with committee members Dr. Ashley Woodson (chair) and Dr. Terrell Morton. Photo by Jovani Jones

MU School of Music graduate student Preston Wilson opens the event with songs such as “Lift Every Voice and Sing.” Photo by Jovani Jones

Students volunteer at the annual MU Celebrates MLK event to ensure things run smoothly. Photo by Jovani Jones

Dr. Ashley Woodson, chair of the 2019 MU Celebrates MLK Committee, introduces the themes for the evening in Jesse Auditorium. Photo by Greg Morton

MU School of Music graduate student Preston Wilson opens the event with songs such as “Lift Every Voice and Sing.” Photo by Jovani Jones

University administrators — including Chancellor Alexander Cartwright and his wife Melinda; College of Education Dean Kathryn Chval; Vice Chancellor of Inclusion, Diversity & Equity Kevin McDonald and his wife Kim; Curator Jon Sundvold and his family; and UM System President Mun Choi — came to Jesse Hall for the annual MU Celebrates MLK keynote address. Photo by Greg Morton

Dr. Brian Brown of Athletics and Dr. Ashley Woodson of Education wait their turn to present. Photo by Greg Morton

Dr. Ashley Woodson of Education waits her turn to present. Photo by Greg Morton
Dr. Terrell Morton (right) and Dr. Cristina Mislán recognize Black and Brown Opportunities, Leadership and Development (BOLD) Academy with the 2019 MLK Award. Photo by Jovani Jones

Keynote speaker Bree Newsome presents to a crowd of several hundred people in Jesse Auditorium. Photo by Jovani Jones

A full crowd of several hundred university and community members gathers to hear Bree Newsome present the keynote address. Photo by Greg Morton

Dr. Terrell Morton (right) and Dr. Cristina Mislán recognize Black and Brown Opportunities, Leadership and Development (BOLD) Academy with the 2019 MLK Award. Photo by Jovani Jones

Bree Newsome (center) meets and takes photos with Brittani Savage and Jade Thompson, co-owners of Crafting Love. Savage and Thompson created special pins for the evening. Photo by Greg Morton

UM System President Choi, Chancellor Alexander Cartwright and members of the MLK Committee take a photo at the conclusion of the event with keynote speaker Bree Newsome.

Newsome meets leaders and members of BOLD Academy, who were the recipients of the 2019 MLK Award. Photo by Jovani Jones

Bree Newsome (center) meets and takes photos with Brittani Savage and Jade Thompson, co-owners of Crafting Love. Savage and Thompson created special pins for the evening. Photo by Greg Morton

UM System President Choi, Chancellor Alexander Cartwright and members of the MLK Committee take a photo at the conclusion of the event with keynote speaker Bree Newsome.

Keynote speaker Bree Newsome speaks to interconnected struggles during her address in Jesse Auditorium. Photo by Jovani Jones

A full crowd of several hundred university and community members gathers to hear Bree Newsome present the keynote address. Photo by Greg Morton

A full crowd of several hundred university and community members gathers to hear Bree Newsome present the keynote address. Photo by Greg Morton

Bree Newsome (center) meets and takes photos with Brittani Savage and Jade Thompson, co-owners of Crafting Love. Savage and Thompson created special pins for the evening. Photo by Greg Morton
Hundreds of students from across the country traveled to Mizzou from Feb. 21-24, 2019, for the Big XII Conference on Black Student Government. Hosted by the Legion of Black Collegians and the Gaines/Oldham Black Culture Center, the 42nd annual event was the first time the conference was at Mizzou since 2011.

The conference is designed to address issues facing African American student government organizations and students on college campuses, and it provides leadership opportunities to move students toward the future. With the theme of “Leadership Reloaded: Redefining our Purpose, Expanding our Vision,” students participated in workshops, a career fair, a gospel concert, meet-and-greets and more.

Attendees also experienced keynote presentations by nationally renowned speakers including CNN political commentator Symone Sanders, two-time NAACP Image Award-winner Dr. Michael Eric Dyson and MU alum and public policy phenom Peyton Head. Additional keynote speakers included Mizzou alumni Kaylan Holloway and Chalana M. Scales-Ferguson, Esq., and Dr. Ashley Woodson, an assistant professor in the College of Education and Faculty Fellow with MU’s Division of Inclusion, Diversity & Equity.

The days were full of networking opportunities, and students found connection through social media using the conference app and Twitter with @BIGXIIMIZ and #LeadershipReloaded.

The conference closed with a banquet, awards presentation and formal dance. More than a dozen cash scholarships and recognition awards were presented, and the 2020 announcement from the University of Oklahoma played on the room’s screens.
Nosa Eke talks strategy on using LinkedIn to connect professionally during one of the workshop sessions in the MU Student Center.

Jeff Perkins (right), Mizzou alum and former graduate assistant with the LGBTQ Resource Center, presents to a workshop group at the MU Student Center.

Chelsea Drake, coordinator of the MU Multicultural Center, leads a workshop session in the Trulaske College of Business.

Bini Sebastian, Brittani Fults and Stephanie Hernandez Rivera present in the MU Multicultural Center during the Big XII Conference.

Dr. Michael Eric Dyson enjoys conversation with Columbia and campus community members at the Gaines/Oldham Black Culture Center.

Mizzou alum Kaylan Holloway presents his keynote address during the Big XII Conference on Black Student Government.

Dr. Michael Eric Dyson discusses his recent book with Columbia and campus community members at the Gaines/Oldham Black Culture Center.

Mizzou staff and students gather for a group picture at the conclusion of the conference.

Dionte' Boyd sings his solo during the Gospel Explosion as the crowd echoed in song.

Mizzou alum Payton Head presents his keynote address during the Big XII Conference on Black Student Government.

Continued
CONFERENCE HISTORY

The Big XII Council on Black Student Government is a regional Black Student Governing Body, which consists of the Black Student Governments from institutions in the Big XII conference. Those universities include: Missouri, Baylor, Colorado, Iowa State, Kansas, Kansas State, Nebraska, Oklahoma, Oklahoma State, Texas, Texas A&M and Texas Tech.

First held at MU in 1977, the conference began when Black students from schools within the Big Eight Conference came together in recognition of shared suffering and problems at their respective institutions. In 1978, MU students formally created the Big Eight Council on Black Student Government. The Big Eight Council on Black Student Government was later renamed in 1997 to include four Texas institutions, forming the new Big XII Conference. While 2012 marked the year Mizzou’s athletic teams left the Big XII Conference, MU still remains a part of the Big XII Conference on Black Student Government.
My experience at the Big XII Conference on black student government helped me to not only better understand why black-oriented spaces are necessary, but it made me proud to be part of one.

Column by ROSHAE HEMMINGS

"Change-makers, creators and pioneers is what defines the Black student leaders at University of Missouri. Leadership has always been our foundation. We are excited to host in 2019 and to exercise as visionaries in working towards the purpose of all Black students, near and far.

This is something that black students are prone to, prompting them to create alcoves where their voices, cultures and stories are heard and appreciated. In talking with students from other colleges and universities, I was able to hear stories and share experiences that further validated the need for black-centric organizations. Furthermore, several students spoke about the lack, and subsequent need, for intersectionality within their respective schools’ social justice centers.

In the LGBTQ workshop I had the opportunity to attend, many queer students expressed their discontent with events and spaces that highlighted the blackness as well as their inclusion under the LGBTQ umbrella. For many black students, their Black Student Unions and Black Student Associations are where they find comfort and a sense of belonging on their campuses.

Lastly, there is a wealth of knowledge to be shared among young, black leaders.

One of the coolest things to see throughout Big XII was the collaboration and camaraderie that came along with the weekend. No matter where we came from, what school we went to or how long we’ve been a part of our respective organizations, we all had the desire to learn from each other and bring the knowledge we acquired back to our campuses and students. There was an overwhelming push to see one another succeed, and genuine happiness when a student or school was celebrated for their achievements. Not only did this make me proud to be part of The Legion of Black Collegians, it also helped me to see that the hardships we face as Black students and the work that we do isn’t for nothing.

“Change-makers, creators and pioneers” defines the black student leaders at MU, as well as those within Big XII and beyond. We are fierce, persistent and dedicated to making our campuses, respective cities and country better for those after us.

Roshae Hemmings is a first year journalism major at MU. She is an opinion columnist who writes about civil rights.
It’s been three years since the nation watched student activist group Concerned Student 1950 protest structural racism at the University of Missouri. Many of the issues spotlighted then, such as MU’s perceived reluctance to acknowledge the history and contributions of people of color, still persist today. This can be traumatizing and invalidating for the 17 percent of non-white students on campus, especially when the modes of racism are invisible to their white peers. But two MU psychology doctoral candidates, Yoanna McDowell and Jonathan Ferguson, are working to alleviate that stress. They co-lead a weekly support group called Healing from Racial Injustices, which provides students of color a place to discuss their experiences with race-related stress at MU.

“We learn a lot from the students who participate,” Ferguson said. “There’s so much wisdom and so much depth in the experiences our students bring in. I get filled every Thursday. Every time we begin this group, by the end of the hour I feel like a different person.”

Both Ferguson and McDowell say racial discrimination and cultural invalidation for students of color are daily obstacles on a campus once open only to white men; MU did not admit its first black student until 1950.
“If you go into a class and everything you read about is from white authors and everything you talk about is predominately white issues,” McDowell said. “I have heard from students that when they have raised that as an issue, they get shot down. Even though you might not be throwing a racial slur at someone, you’re saying ‘hey you’re not important.’”

A wide body of research confirms that repeated experiences of various forms of racism add up over time and can lead to symptoms of psychological trauma. The symptoms are similar to those of post-traumatic stress disorder, and can include hypervigilance, anxiety and depression, according to one peer-reviewed study in the Journal of Counseling Psychology.

Creating a space to talk through it is one of the reasons why McDowell said the group is only open to students of color.

“We already don’t really have a space, so making a space available is like ‘This is your space, you’re free to talk about whatever without feeling like you have to be restricted or someone’s going to put you down,’” McDowell said. “Not saying that if white members did come they would do that. But it’s just to have something that you can feel more comfortable talking about issues you might not get to talk about.”

Former psychology graduate student Angela Haeny co-founded the support group in 2014 to help students cope with the side-effects of minority underrepresentation on campus. A year later, during the fall 2015 protests, student activist group Concerned Student 1950 raised similar issues in its highly publicized list of demands to the administration. Demand number seven was for an increased mental health budget for the purpose of hiring more mental health professionals of color and boosting outreach for the MU Counseling Center.

In the spring of 2017, MU students did vote to increase funding toward the center, which was intended to pay for three additional counselors, according to previous KBIA reporting. Of the 31 mental health care professionals employed by MU, 10 identify as people of color, according to data provided by MU spokeswoman Liz McCune.

In 2016, 32 percent of psychology doctoral degrees were granted to people of color, according to data compiled by the American Psychological Association. But as of 2015 less than one-fifth of the U.S. psychology workforce identified as racial or ethnic minorities. Those numbers suggest finding a mental health professional who looks like them, and can empathize with racial trauma, is an ongoing challenge for people of color.

Haeny says the need for the support group, which is not considered official mental health treatment, is obvious. But continuing to meet that need comes at a price known as “the minority tax.”

“People of color have to take on additional things like starting this group,” Haeny said. “Yoanna and Jonathan, they’re not getting paid or getting credit for this. Just because we see that it’s a need we take on these types of responsibilities.”

McDowell said the total costs for running the support group is around $1,000, and that covers the cost of food and renting the space in the Multicultural Center. The program has received support from numerous sources on campus including the Division of Inclusion, Diversity & Equity; the Department of Educational, School and Counseling Psychology; and MU Black Studies Department.

Haeny moved to Connecticut in 2017 to complete a residency in clinical psychology at Yale School of Medicine. Now, Ferguson and McDowell lead the group together. From what he’s seen, Ferguson says MU has a long way to go before the group is no longer relevant: “I can’t really envision a time on this campus where it’s not necessary to have a space like this.”

In the meantime, Ferguson and McDowell welcome all students of color in need of healing from racial injustices to join them from 2-3 p.m. on Thursdays in the Multicultural Center. No appointment necessary.
On Feb. 26, around 6:39 p.m., I was standing in line outside of the Reynolds Alumni Center preparing to be inducted into the 2019 class of Mizzou 39. As I got closer to the stage on Traditions Plaza, I watched as the inductees in line in front of me spun around and walked backwards in order to hide their identities from the eagerly awaiting crowd.

It was not until this moment I realized that this meant I was going to have to attempt to drive my wheelchair in reverse, which I, unsurprisingly, do not do often. I yelled nervously to Megan Stober, who was standing behind me in line, “Do you think I can do it backwards?!” to which she immediately replied, “Yes, just go for it!” She grabbed one of the handlebars on the back of my chair and helped guide me as she walked with her back to the crowd.

Megan and I have been best friends since the sixth grade and grew up in Columbia together, but our Mizzou stories started differently.

DIFFERENT PATHS

I was born with Spinal Muscular Atrophy and have used a wheelchair basically my entire life. I entered Mizzou dealing both with the new stresses of college as well as accessibility challenges related to my disability.

As a result, my first year here was a bit of a struggle. This changed when I met my mentor Amber Cheek, the ADA coordinator for campus, toward the end of my freshman year. She encouraged me to join several disability advocacy organizations, and through these I was introduced to a community of people at Mizzou who had a deep passion for disability rights like I do. This invigorated me, and I made it my mission to improve the accessibility of campus.

Megan entered Mizzou “able-bodied,” but during the fall of her sophomore year, she realized she could no longer fit into any of her boots. Alarmed by this sudden change, she had several diagnostic tests done and was eventually diagnosed with primary lymphedema: a rare chronic disorder caused by a dysfunction in her lymphatic system. This meant she would have to get used to wearing compression socks routinely, which are not only uncomfortable but also invited unwanted stares and questions.

Instead of choosing to view her newfound sense of identity as someone with a disability in a negative light, Megan embraced it. Over time, she became comfortable talking openly about her disability and wearing clothing that showed off her compression garments.

Both Megan and I found a passion for advocacy through our pride in our identities as disabled people. Over our time here, we have often collaborated on projects and supported each other’s individual efforts.
SUPPORT THROUGH MDC

Personally, my involvement with the Mizzou Disability Coalition (MDC) has been one of my most cherished and enriching experiences since coming to Mizzou. MDC is a student-run disability advocacy organization that I joined my sophomore year.

One of my favorite memories from MDC was when I first got to lead our annual Accessibility Walk. This walk takes administrators on a tour of the state of accessibility of campus, pointing out both positive accomplishments and areas in need of improvement. It was incredibly empowering to sit in my wheelchair in front of administrators and use my unique perspective to educate them on issues that would otherwise be overlooked.

After the walk, several of the issues I identified were fixed. Since this experience, I have become president of the organization. I have worked to increase the number of disabled students in the organization and mentored them in order to have a group that will continue to work to improve the accessibility of Mizzou after I have graduated. At this past year’s Accessibility Walk, I watched four new members with disabilities use their own powerful voices to lead the walk and speak with administrators about their concerns, an experience that truly filled me with pride.

Megan has also left a lasting impact on campus through her work. The semester after her diagnosis, Megan took Amber Cheek’s Recreation for Individuals with Disabilities course. During a lecture about accessibility coordinators and the role they play within organizations, it clicked for Megan that Greek life, which she had been involved in since first coming to Mizzou, needed something like this: someone who was actively working to ensure the inclusion of people with disabilities in their community.

Amber worked with Megan to map out the responsibilities of this position, and Megan emailed her proposal to every executive member of the Greek council, hoping someone would respond. During the following months, the new president decided to make Megan’s idea the main focus of her term.

Together, they changed the coordinator into a committee and formed the country’s first PHA Accessibility Committee. Over the past semester, Megan has led this committee as they lay the groundwork for more accessible Panhellenic communities around the country. Their work has ranged from creating accommodation plans and guides to help chapters plan accessible events, to working with Columbia Public Works to begin plans for fixing sidewalks.

COMMUNITY BUILDERS

As I sat next to my best friend with my back to the crowd on reveal night, waiting for my name to be called, I thought about the community Megan and I have become a part of here. We have met a group of incredible disabled people and allies who empower one another and build each other up with endless support. We have grown together in our identities, our confidence, and our skills as leaders.

Being honored with this award alongside my partner in crime felt like the perfect way to commemorate the end of such a treasured time in our lives. I think if our sixth grade selves could see us, they’d be pretty proud.
Roughly 900 Mizzou students have non-apparent disabilities. That is, they have neurological or psychological conditions or learning disabilities that are not immediately apparent to casual observers. Nonetheless, these disabilities are very real.

We recently spoke to three Mizzou students with non-apparent disabilities and asked them to share their stories as part of Mizzou’s ongoing effort to demystify disability.

You can join the conversation, too. Share your own story on social media with the hashtag #TheFutureIsAccessible. You also can visit the Disability Center to learn more about resources for students with disabilities and those who support them.

EMILY MARTIN

Emily Martin had just finished the Jump Rope for Heart challenge when her first migraine hit. She was in fifth grade. “I thought I was dying,” she remembers.

More migraines came a year later. With medication, she kept them at bay until high school. Then, during sophomore year, Martin developed daily hemiplegic migraines, which mimic the symptoms of a stroke. She missed so much school that she withdrew to be homeschooled. She didn’t return until senior year.

For college, the Oakville, Missouri, native went a year to St. Louis Community College, then transferred to Mizzou to major in biology.

But one year in, Martin’s grades were suffering. She still had daily migraines and missed a lot of class. On bad days, the migraines nearly paralyzed the left side of her body. Sometimes they caused the left side of her face to droop and her words to slur. “People thought I was drunk,” she says.

During a doctor visit over the summer, her doctor suggested she explore any accommodations Mizzou could make for her. That’s when she discovered the Disability Center.

The center helped in several ways. For instance, during tests Martin is allowed to wear a wide-brimmed hat, which shields her eyes from light and glare. Also, the exam questions are written in large print on blue-tinted paper, which reduces eye strain.

Perhaps the biggest accommodation has been extra time on exams. Tests are stressful, and stress is a migraine trigger. To manage the pain, Martin does a breathing exercise — breathe in for four beats, hold for seven, exhale for eight. Doing the exercise helps, but it takes time away from answering questions, making the extra time critical.

“It’s meant everything, just putting those accommodations in place,” Martin says. “That little bit of help has allowed me to do the work to get where I need to be.”

Martin expects to graduate in December 2019 with a double-major in biology and psychology. She knows she wants a career in medicine, but she isn’t sure if she will choose medical school, a physician’s assistant program or paramedic training.

Since 2017, she has worked part-time as an emergency medical technician for Cole County, Missouri, going out on medical calls with paramedics. She likes using her skills during psychiatric calls where someone is in distress, unable to cope and is acting out.

“I just love comforting them without medicine,” she says. “I walk them through the breathing exercise — if it’s a kid I’ll give them a stuffed animal to squeeze during the breaths.”

Sometimes the patients will marvel to her at how she knew just what to do or say. Martin, however, doesn’t find it surprising. “Anyone who has an experience of going through something like that has a better idea of what the person needs,” she says.
The flight attendant brought John Eccleston’s drink to him near the beginning of his long flight home from a short-term study abroad trip in China. “Xièxiè,” he said, taking the cup from her. He was hours into the flight before he realized he was saying “thank you” in Chinese to the American airline crew.

Eccleston’s 10 weeks in China were an immersive experience. His faculty-led cohort spent five weeks in seven cities learning business management and studying the Chinese language. Then they spent five weeks in internships in Shanghai.

The experience was possible for all of the students because of Mizzou’s strong study-abroad program. For Eccleston, it was also possible because of the MU Disability Center, which ensured that he had the accommodations he needed for his studies and exams even while he was half a world away from Columbia.

Eccleston has attention deficit disorder, which makes it difficult for him to focus and tune out distractions. He gets note-taking assistance, receives extra time on exams and takes exams outside the classroom in quiet rooms provided by the Disability Center.

It’s part of the reason he chose Mizzou. While in high school, Eccleston toured several colleges within driving distance of his Chicago-area home. At each campus, he asked what accommodations they could make for him. The reception he received and the answers he got varied.

“Mizzou was the most welcoming,” he says, and he clicked immediately with the access adviser he met. “He was one of the reasons my mom was comfortable sending me six and a half hours away.”

With accommodations in place, those barriers that might have kept Eccleston from succeeding were gone. And the business major with a minor in leadership and public service has been able to thrive.

Eccleston has taken several classes through the MU Office of Service Learning, which gave him the opportunity to tutor refugees from Eritrea, a country on the east coast of Africa, and it led him to intern with the Missouri Department of Economic Development, where he has worked in the energy division since August 2017.

He is interested in a public policy career at the state or federal level that promotes economic development and energy sustainability, particularly as it relates to infrastructure and climate change.

Sophie Endacott has always liked the idea of being a veterinarian, but the thought of having to put an animal down was enough to make the junior in health sciences aim for medical school instead. The pull of her four-legged friends has proved too strong, however.

“I just want to help them and the people who care for them,” the Nixa, Missouri, native says. “If they’re sick, they can’t help themselves.”

Her appreciation for animals has only grown in the past two years since she started using a service dog, a disability accommodation she arranged through the MU Disability Center. The dog was a family pet — a golden retriever and Great Pyrenees mix named Hudson — that she had trained to be a service dog. “He’s been perfect,” Endacott says.

Bringing a service dog to campus and into class with her has helped Endacott perform at her best, but it has also led to challenges.

“A lot of people try to pet my dog or do things to distract him,” Endacott says. “I know most people just love being around animals, but what they don’t realize is that by distracting him, he’s not able to do his job for me.”

Sometimes, she says, people will talk to Hudson and ignore her; they’ll take her picture without permission or explanation; or, because they can’t see a visible disability, they’ll accuse her of faking one to bring her dog with her to class.

Most of the time, though, the awkwardness stems from people simply not knowing how to behave around someone with a service dog.

Endacott has some advice:

- Always ask permission to pet a service dog
- Talk to the person, not to the dog
- Treat the person normally — be respectful and kind
- Don’t take the person’s picture without their permission

As a student with a non-apparent disability, Endacott has found comfort in the Disability Center. “You need a place where they understand you,” she says, “and the Disability Center is that place.”

Mizzou Spotlight

Identify

Spring 2019

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LOVE OF MIZZOU, FAMILY SPARKS
DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION GIFT

Mizzou runs deep in Ken Donohew’s family. The 1967 industrial engineering graduate counts his father, mother, two aunts, an uncle, a second cousin and grandfather as relatives holding an MU degree.

Love of Mizzou is a family tradition, and he and wife Ellen Kippel have been longtime fiscal supporters of MU. Paying forward the opportunity for a quality education and resources is a family tradition, too. That’s why Donohew and Kippel established the Major General Jack N. Donohew Fund for Diversity and Inclusion in Engineering as part of Mizzou Giving Day 2019.

Jack Donohew, Ken’s father, earned a chemical engineering degree from MU in 1933 before a long, distinguished military career after graduating from West Point, which included time as the Commandant of the Air War College and Air Command and Staff College. He was awarded Missouri Honor Award for Distinguished Service in Engineering in 1961. His son and daughter-in-law wanted to support an endeavor at Mizzou that he would be proud to have his name attached to.

“We’ve always thought education was very important. If we don’t learn, we’re never going to find our mistakes and improve on them,” Donohew said. “To me, we should be pushing education more than anything.”

Through a variety of visits, strong family ties and eventually his own attendance, Donohew built a strong fondness for MU. He has stories that span from rolling around the Columns as a child to summer school at Mizzou to his days spent at The Shack as a student.

Up until 2000, he had done it all at MU — except my walk at graduation. Donohew missed the ceremony while at Officer Training School at Lackland Air Force Base in Texas. In 1999, he wrote then-Dean Jim Thompson and inquired about finally participating in a graduation ceremony, and in 2000, 33 years after earning his IE degree, Donohew did just that. And he shared the special weekend with his uncle Paul.

“They invited me to come back, and in that same timeframe, my uncle came down. I hadn’t realized he was going to go through the 50th anniversary of graduating from the veterinary school. They had invited him to come down there at the same time,” Donohew recalled.

In the years since his graduation, Donohew and Kippel have supported a variety of endeavors at Mizzou and had been looking for a way to aid the College of Engineering. With several new initiatives in recent years, including the Office of Diversity and Outreach Initiatives and its Inclusivity Center, the right opportunity presented itself. Not only to help Mizzou Engineering, but also to carry on a father’s legacy.

“I thought it would be something my father would want me to do,” Donohew said. “He spent his whole career in the Air Force and was very involved with education. And to him, education was always important. I thought that diversity would be exactly where he’d want us to put money to support.”

“I totally support him in what he wanted to do,” Kippel said. “I love the university campus grounds, and I think it’s a beautiful school.”

Donohew spent his career as an engineer with the Department of Defense and retired with the rank of lieutenant colonel in the Air Force Reserve. He credited his father for instilling the importance of education after growing up with dyslexia. The elder Donohew also helped spark his son’s love and importance of Mizzou at an early age.

Donohew’s uncle, Paul Zollman, played a pivotal role in his love of Mizzou, too. Zollman was in the first class from the MU College of Veterinary Medicine to graduate with Doctor in Veterinary Medicine degrees in 1950. “Paul would take me to get ice cream at the ag school before I would let him pick up his future wife — my aunt,” Donohew said.

Ken Donohew and Ellen Kippel, front, established the Major General Jack N. Donohew Fund for Diversity and Inclusion in Engineering as part of Mizzou Giving Day 2019. Photo courtesy of Ken Donohew and Ellen Kippel.
While walking up and down Rollins Street at the annual Midnight BBQ, then-freshman Aaron Witherspoon noticed two classmates of his. He hadn’t made any friends yet, and he was determined to change that.

“I kind of stepped outside of my comfort zone and introduced myself to just take that first step,” Witherspoon says. “We’ve been close ever since.”

The willingness to leave his comfort zone didn’t end there. Later that year, Witherspoon joined the Mizzou’s Black Men’s Initiative. Because of his passion for Mizzou, he also joined Alumni Association Student Board and United Ambassadors. Finally, he joined the fraternity Alpha Phi Alpha.

Alpha Phi Alpha in particular gave Witherspoon the support he needed to excel on campus.

“They helped me really build my confidence and really show me that I can do anything on the university that I put my mind and heart into,” Witherspoon said. “The sky is the limit and I can do anything.”

Witherspoon is a personal financial planning major in the College of Human Environmental Science. At age 16, he bought his first share of stock and has been increasing his financial knowledge ever since. Witherspoon puts his own money at risk while investing. He believes in taking chances in order to improve himself.

“You’re not going to grow unless you’re uncomfortable,” Witherspoon says.

Witherspoon gives advice to his friends about successfully managing their finances and is always looking to lend a helping hand.

“That’s something that I try to stress a lot about is finances,” Witherspoon says. “Make sure you guys are saving your money and budgeting.”

Witherspoon points out that “you’ll probably be close to a millionaire” by age 50 if you consistently contribute money to an individual retirement account.

Witherspoon’s job has given him even more experience and knowledge to share with his peers. He works at Commerce Bank and shadows a portfolio manager. Witherspoon also takes a class that requires him to do taxes through the university’s free tax-preparation clinic.

That experience gave him the confidence to prepare his parents’ taxes earlier this year.

“They were completely shocked that I knew how to do everything,” Witherspoon says. “They just completely trusted me.”

Witherspoon’s dad, who lives in St. Louis, sent him a message the next day saying, “Son, I can’t believe you really did our taxes.” His dad also expressed interest in having Witherspoon help the family with investing once he graduates.

“That’s the long-term goal for my family,” Witherspoon says. “Eventually when I get out I want to make sure that my family is pretty good.”

Aaron Witherspoon served in several roles on campus, including Finance Co-Chair for the 42nd Annual Big XII Conference on Black Student Government at Mizzou.