

# NEWS & information

## FROM THE PRESIDENT

Dr. Sidney A. McPhee



*Welcome to the  
Fall 2017 Semester!*

As always, I appreciate all you do to support the goals and objectives of our great University.

In this newsletter, I want to highlight just a few achievements from this past year and provide some information on some of our plans for the future.

I welcome your feedback and comments. Please contact me at [Sidney.McPhee@mtsu.edu](mailto:Sidney.McPhee@mtsu.edu).

I also invite you to visit my blog at [mtsu.edu/President](http://mtsu.edu/President) for updates and information from my office.

**True Blue!**

DR. SIDNEY A. MCPHEE

### A TRUE NEW ERA

How significant is the new governing board structure at MTSU?

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### RIPPLE EFFECT

You work for a university that is growing in prominence and impact.



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### STUDENT SUCCESS

MTSU has excelled in the areas of retention and graduation over the past few years.

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## STUDENT SUCCESS

My focus continues to be on student success and ensuring that every MTSU student gets the attention each one deserves on the path to earning a degree. Our exceptional MTSU faculty is the key to this effort!

**MTSU has excelled in the areas of retention and graduation over the past few years.** Though that distinction may not reach the masses in the way that our fantastic March Madness victories by the Blue Raiders basketball team have over the past two years, MTSU has built a sterling reputation within the higher education community nationwide as among the best and most innovative in this space. Representatives from the Lumina Foundation, Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation, and Community College Resource Center at Columbia University, among others, have made visits to study our efforts and results.

In fact, MTSU was invited to join 44 other leading universities from across the country to participate in the



Re-Imagining the First Year initiative last semester. This initiative, sponsored by the American Association of

State Colleges and Universities with support from the Gates Foundation, seeks to increase student success rates by focusing on improving students' first-year experience.

**Here are some of the latest updates on our collective student success efforts.**

In Summer 2016, a record 312 new students participated in our Scholars Academy, a two-week summer bridge, early-arrival program designed to enhance the success of at-risk students. The average **retention rate** for MTSU students who went through the **Scholars Academy is 83 percent**, well above that for other students. In addition, 54 percent of students in our Scholars Academy completed at least 30 hours in their first year of study, a rate that surpasses that of other students.

**Free tutoring** was available during Fall 2016 for more than **200 courses**, a record level of support here at MTSU. More importantly, more of our students are going for tutoring and spending more hours in tutoring sessions, with tutoring usage in the first semester (almost 9,000 hours) surpassing that of all the previous year. In Spring 2017, the total number of **tutoring sessions increased** by an astounding **64 percent** compared to Spring 2016. The number of hours spent by students in those tutoring sessions rose by 67 percent from Spring 2016 to Spring

2017 to nearly 10,000 total hours—an increase of almost 4,000 hours over the previous spring.

We also implemented a **Supplemental Instruction** pilot program starting last fall, providing students enrolled in some of MTSU's most challenging courses with additional instructional support. This involved **21 course sections**, across three colleges, and served more than 1,500 students. The program is already showing very promising results. Students who attend SI study sessions have significantly higher exam and course grades than students who do not. This fall, SI will be offered in more than **70 course sections** across 13 courses in eight departments and five colleges.

We launched a campus **student information and analytics system**, an important tool used by multiple campus partners in their work with current MTSU students. This powerful technology platform, developed and supported by the Education Advisory Board (EAB), allows for outreach campaigns—like getting students enrolled for the upcoming semester—that produced significant gains in our persistence rates, as well as generated additional tuition and fees.

MTSU's **REBOUND program** has been nationally recognized as a “model of excellence” for work to “re-position” freshmen who conclude the first semester with less than a 2.0 GPA. Our students who participate in the program retain at significantly higher levels than students who do not.

Academic advisors from across the University continue to do amazing work and are crucial to student success efforts. On their own initiative, and led by advising managers **Brelinda Johnson** and **Eric Miller**, MTSU academic advisors hosted the third annual NACADA State Drive In on May 8. With a theme of “Culture of Engagement: Strategies for Aiding Advisors, Faculty, Staff and Students to Be True to Themselves,” the conference attracted over 150 attendees representing 20 community colleges and universities across the state, as well as Alabama. Mike Krause, the Tennessee Higher Education Commission executive director, gave the keynote on the future of higher education in the state. Our Advisor

I AM *true* **BLUE**™


Professional Development Committee also has evolved and completed important work. Under the leadership of chair **Amber Bollinger** and assistant chair **Janae Daniels**, the committee has thoughtfully and carefully planned a coordinated series of training and professional development activities for 2017–18.

MTSU is one of five institutions featured by the Association of Public and Land Grant Universities (APLU) in the **SMART training program**. APLU recently launched an online educational resource, “A SMART Approach to Student Success,” to provide educational leaders across the country an opportunity to learn from peer colleges

and universities that have flourished in their student success initiatives. More than a dozen interviews with MTSU administrators, faculty, and staff are included in the training program. MTSU also was one of 12 institutions recognized by APLU for its use of data to improve student success outcomes. Additionally, University College Dean **Rick Sluder** was recently identified by Ellucian as one of 20 experts in higher education in using technology to change institutional operations. The work of MTSU is featured in Ellucian’s e-book *The Future of Higher Education: Experts Share Insights about Technologies That Will Transform Your Institution*. [MTSU](#)

## A TRUE NEW ERA

Everywhere I go these days, the No. 1 question I am asked is



“How significant is the new governing board structure at MTSU?”

I think it is fair to say that the creation of the new board and our newfound independence as an institution is the second-most important event in the history of the University, behind our founding. This represents a true new era for MTSU, as well as an opportunity to invigorate and inspire the entire MTSU community about the impact this will have on our University.

The 10-member board stems from the FOCUS Act, championed by Gov. Bill Haslam and signed into law last year. The law established local governing boards for MTSU and the other five former Tennessee Board of Regents (TBR) universities. The state’s creation of individual governing boards was the next logical step in better aligning our postsecondary education system to ensure Tennessee reaches its Drive to 55, a goal to have 55 percent of residents with a postsecondary degree or credential by 2025.

Formal oversight of MTSU shifted from the TBR to the local Board of Trustees after our new governance board met for its inaugural session in April. Joined by Gov. Haslam and with faculty, staff, and community members on hand, I was honored to convene the group for the first time inside the Student Union Ballroom and to call that historic meeting to order.

In his remarks, Gov. Haslam reminded our trustees that MTSU remains a vital part of the larger state higher education system, yet the new local structure will allow greater latitude in setting our own strategic priorities and lets each institution play to its strengths. Haslam also commented that one of the most critical responsibilities for the MTSU Board was its singular focus on the University, and that in nominating

potential board members he was looking for men and women who got up each day thinking about ways to make MTSU better.

When you are part of a diverse system like we were with the TBR, it’s simply impossible for board members to have that type of focus and commitment to the needs of a single campus. With six universities, 13 community colleges, and 27 colleges of applied technology, the TBR had to consider a vast array of differences in needs, missions, and student demographics. Decisions were often focused on the larger general needs of the entire group. As such, the TBR was not always capable of addressing the unique needs of our campus.

In looking at our new, independent board, I find it very comforting that almost all of our members have some history and experience with our campus. We have several alumni on the board, as well as representatives of some of the state’s leading corporations who have been involved with MTSU for many years. They know the University and understand the important role MTSU plays in educating Tennesseans. Also, and I think this is

important, they have a sense of what MTSU can become.

It’s a little too early to talk about specific actions; but, as we move forward with this new form of governance, and as our board gains an even deeper understanding of our great institution, I believe you will see them begin to help shape our mission and identify new opportunities that will complement the quality programs and activities we have on our campus.

One of the most immediate changes . . . will be the speed with which certain things get accomplished.

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The staff and members of the MTSU Board of Trustees on the day of their inaugural public meeting (l-r): Standing, Board of Trustees staff members Kimberly S. Edgar, chief of staff, Office of the President, and Heidi M. Zimmerman, University counsel and secretary to the board; Trustee W. Andrew Adams; Board of Trustees vice chair Darrell Freeman Sr.; Trustee Christine Karbowski; Board of Trustees chair Stephen B. Smith; Trustee Joey A. Jacobs; Faculty Representative Tony Johnston; and MTSU President Sidney A. McPhee. Seated, Trustee J.B. Baker; Trustee Pete DeLay; Student Representative Lindsey Weaver; and Trustee Pamela J. Wright.

While I think it's safe to say that we're going to see some new directions and changes over time, I'm confident that our board understands that **our first and most important priority will always be our students** and providing them with the support and skills they need to be successful. MTSU has been recognized as the state's top comprehensive university, and our board is committed to maintaining that status.

**What changes if any will people see quickly?** Without question, one of the most immediate changes our students and faculty will note will be the speed with which certain things get accomplished. Being able to address issues here on campus allows us to

be more responsive and timely in our decision-making. In addition, having our own board will help remove one layer of bureaucracy, since we've transferred some of the decisions formerly made at TBR to our campus.

One unknown in all of this is how this change will affect higher education funding and support from the state. Gov. Haslam has been very clear that he doesn't expect this to become a "free-for-all" with the legislature. However, there undoubtedly will be some competition among our universities as everyone seeks what's best for their institution. We're very fortunate that the Tennessee General Assembly has long recognized the

important role that MTSU plays in our state's higher education system, but **we will have to expand our efforts in educating the legislature and keeping our needs in front of them.** I expect our new board will play a critical role in assisting us in that area.

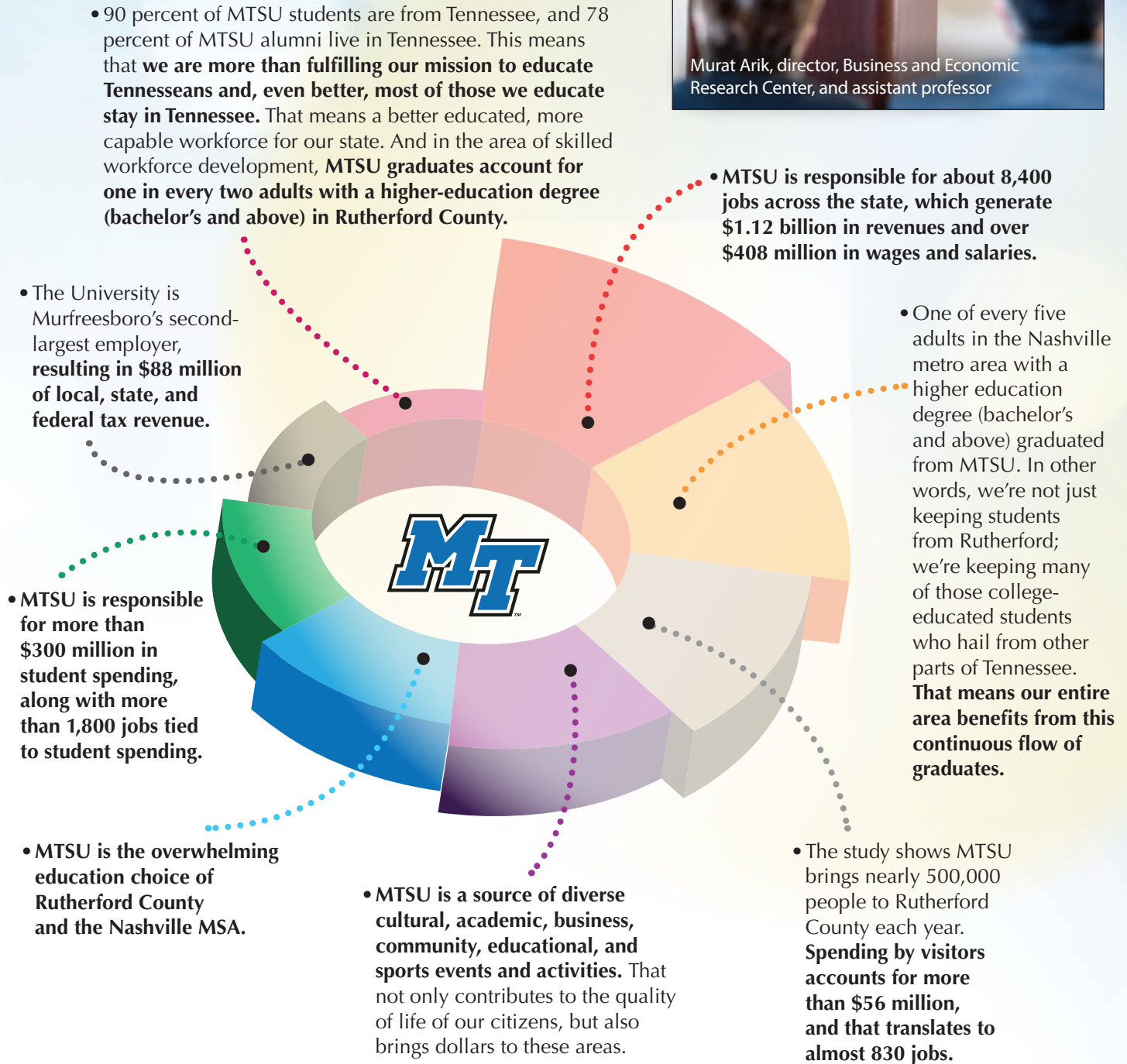
In the end, I believe this new level of independence for the former TBR universities is truly bold and potentially transformational for MTSU. I look forward to learning and exploring the opportunities it could provide toward our mission of ensuring student success and providing more graduates for the state's workforce. [MTSU](#)

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# RIPPLE EFFECT

You work for a university that is growing in prominence and impact. Witness the recent study by MTSU's Business and Economic Research Center (BERC), a center housed in MTSU's Jones College of Business, on MTSU's economic impact on the region.

## According to BERC's report:

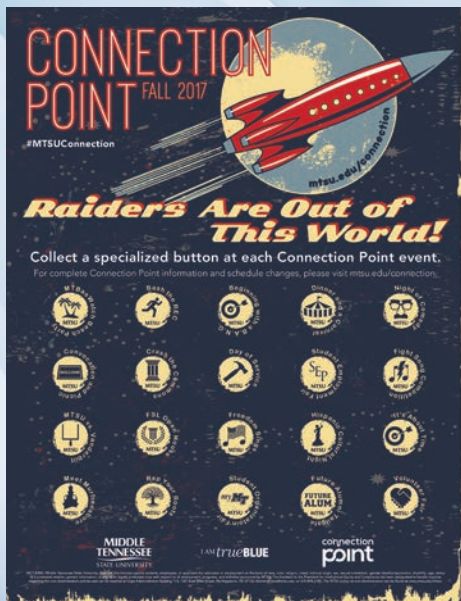


There is no question that MTSU is unrivaled in what we bring to the table for our city, county, and region. **Much of who we are now, and what we want to become in the future, depends upon the continued health and prosperity of your University.** I hope each and every one of you appreciates the vast and significant economic impact that our student population brings to the local economy. [mtsu.com](http://mtsu.com)

# STUDENT LIFE

The formula for student success involves more than just ensuring students make it to class, fulfill course obligations, and get consistent and proper academic advising on their journey toward a degree. After all, college life is more than just books and classrooms.

This year, Week of Welcome is combining with our Connection Point program for a seamless start to the new academic year. Convocation, which has traditionally been held on Sunday, was moved to Saturday; fan-favorite events have moved to new days; and other events are making their debut. Here's what's new:



## CONNECTION POINT

During our 10 freshman CUSTOMS orientation sessions this summer, staff from the Division of Student Affairs talked with students about Connection Point and the importance of attending at least six events by Sept. 6. In addition to meeting new people and having a great time, students will receive an **event-inspired button** designed especially for each activity, plus the opportunity to win some great prizes.

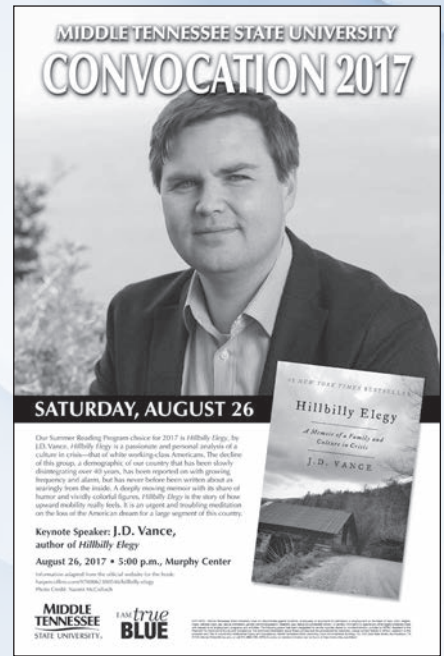
Students are being asked to bring their MTSU Blue ID with them to the activities/events so Student Affairs staff can card-swipe them in to the event. This allows our staff to monitor students' involvement to ensure they are connecting with our community. Students not connecting with the community will be contacted to determine how we can assist them to become more involved on campus.

**We know that the first six weeks of the semester are critically important for student success.** Students need to connect academically in the classroom and they need to connect socially out of the classroom in order to feel like they belong at MTSU. That's why all of our students, and especially freshmen, are being asked to attend a variety of Connection Point events.

## Connection Point kicked off Friday, Aug. 25, at 6 p.m. with Dinner and a Carnival on the Student Union Commons.

On Saturday, **Aug. 26**, MTSU marked its 16th **University Convocation at 5 p.m. in Murphy Center.** This year's summer reading selection is *Hillbilly Elegy* by J.D. Vance, who was be keynote speaker for Convocation. *Hillbilly Elegy* is a passionate and personal analysis of a culture in crisis—that of white working-class Americans. The slow decline of this group over 40 years has been reported on with growing frequency and alarm.

Convocation was immediately followed by the **President's Picnic** on the lawn between the Kennon Sports Hall of Fame and Floyd Stadium. Mr. Vance signed copies of his book, and food and game-day activities were



be available for all. I hope you joined us for this **True Blue** tradition.

In collaboration with the College of Media and Entertainment, **Freedom Sings** was the Connection Point highlight on **Sunday, Aug. 27 at 2:30 p.m. in Tucker Theatre.** An interactive show featuring some of Nashville's finest musicians and hit-makers, *Freedom Sings* was an opportunity to learn about our most fundamental freedoms through the inspiration, activism, and censorship that lie in the untold stories of some of America's most famous songs.



You can learn more about the Connection Point program and events at [mtsu.edu/connection](http://mtsu.edu/connection). **MTSU**



## CAMPUS SAFETY

**In response to a series of off-campus incidents at nearby apartment complexes that house some of our students, MTSU has worked closely with the City of Murfreesboro in recent months to develop strategies to improve safety at these complexes and reduce criminal activity.**

While MTSU has no authority over these off-campus apartment complexes, the University does recognize that many of these nearby complexes, while marketed to students, are becoming increasingly populated by non-students and are rented by the bedroom rather than full apartments.



Shane McFarland

Murfreesboro Mayor **Shane McFarland** and I, along with city and University officials, have met directly with complex owners and managers in recent months to discuss our concerns. We're pleased that **some complexes have already increased safety measures** such as adding security guard check-ins at main entrances.

I have worked directly with Mayor McFarland and his administration to develop a number of proposals, including a pending agreement that would **allow our University Police Department to support and assist Murfreesboro Police** as requested by the city in off-campus areas.



Buddy Peaster

It would likely start with MTSU Police aiding inspections of complexes as part of a safety program that also is being developed. MTSU Police Chief **Buddy Peaster** is working with Murfreesboro Police Chief Karl Durr on this effort.

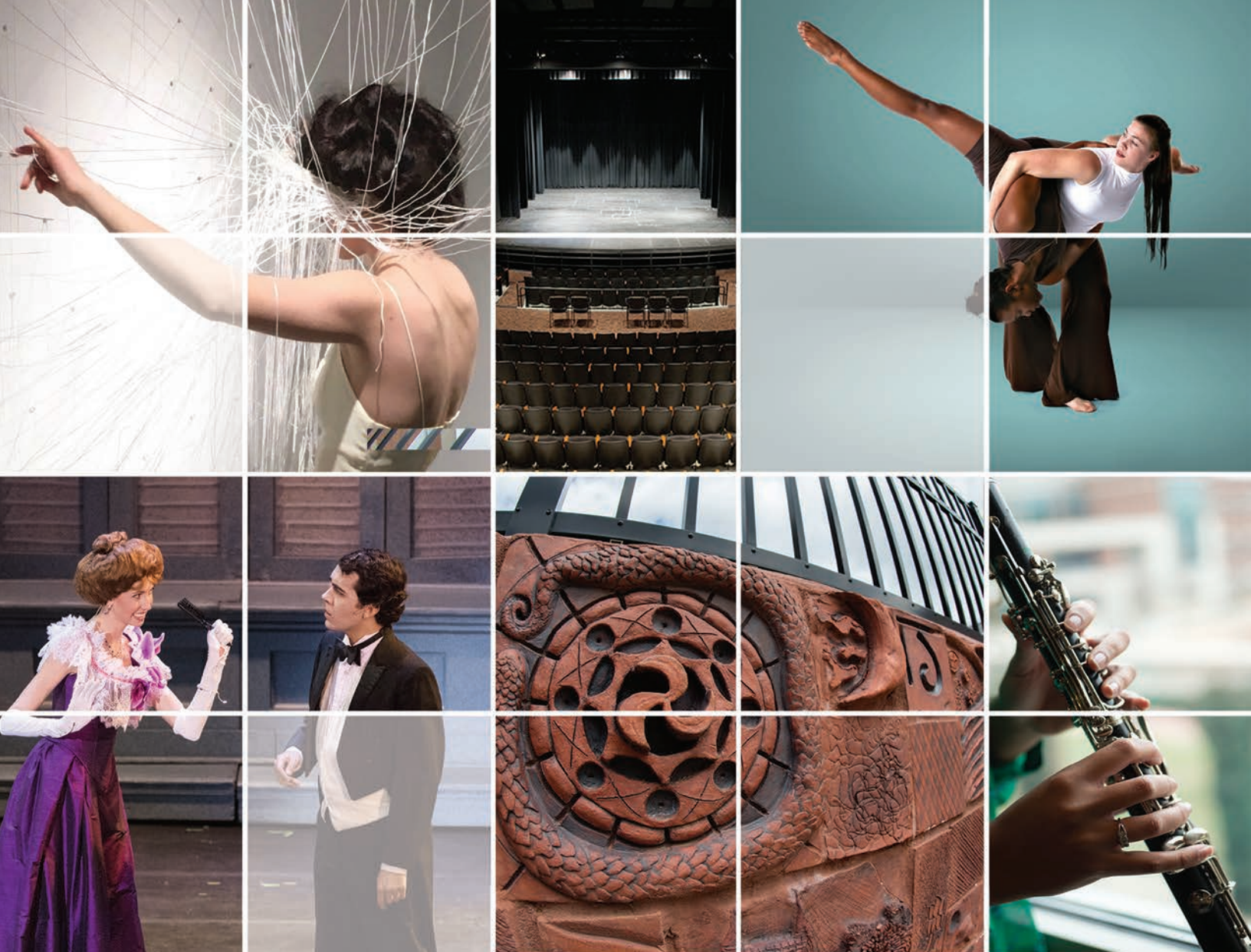
**This safety program would allow apartment managers to invite police to assess security measures and practices in place at their complexes.** Facilities that meet criteria and implement recommended best practices for safety would be eligible for a **special emblem** that could be displayed to prospective tenants.

The city is also working on an easy-to-read **online resource** so that prospective students and parents can quickly see how many police calls and violent crimes have been recorded at complexes on a quarterly and annual basis.

In addition, the city and University group is working to allow city police to refer criminal and noncriminal cases involving students off campus to the University's Office of Student Conduct for review under MTSU's Code of Conduct.

**MTSU Police employs 44 full-time officers, five full-time dispatchers, and about 20 part-time student workers** to patrol MTSU's 500-plus-acre campus. Our officers are commissioned, have full arrest powers, and meet the same employment and training requirements as other law enforcement in Tennessee. **The University has put forward several proactive and preventive actions in recent years to reduce crime, including more security cameras, improved campus lighting, increased foot patrols, and community policing, as well as public awareness campaigns through Student Health Services and MTSU Housing and Residential Life.**

The latest campus crime statistics from the Tennessee Bureau of Investigation show **drops in most major categories at MTSU**. The annual TBI report showed the number of sexual offenses reported dropped from seven in 2015 to two in 2016, weapon law violations remained the same (with four reported in both years), theft/larceny was down 18 percent, assaults decreased 20 percent, DUI went down 50 percent, burglary incidents fell 47 percent, and trespass declined by 77 percent. [MTSU](#)



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College of Liberal Arts

## Highlights from the 2017–18 Fall Season

### **Todd Art Gallery presents**

Alums 2017: A Celebration  
August 31-September 20, 2017

### **Wind Ensemble and Symphonic Band Concert**

October 12, 2017

### ***A Midsummer Night's Dream***

November 8-12, 2017

### ***Joys of the Season***

December 3, 2017

**[mtsuarts.com](http://mtsuarts.com)**



# BUDGET AND SALARY OVERVIEW

The final state budget, proposed by Gov. Bill Haslam and subsequently approved by the state legislature, includes a reduction in state funding for MTSU under the THEC Outcomes Based Funding Formula. However, this was offset by an increase in enhancement funds, and the net result provides a **\$479,000 state appropriation increase for MTSU**.

At the June quarterly meeting, the MTSU Board of Trustees approved a combined **tuition and mandatory fee increase of 3.9 percent**. New funds from this increase, along with the appropriations increase, will cover some inflationary costs, part of a **3 percent salary increase**, faculty promotion salary increases, and funds to help ensure that our student facilities, technology, and adequate resources are available to support student success. The governor did partially fund the salary increase this year.

At the same meeting, our new Board of Trustees approved the 3 percent cost-of-living adjustment strategy for an across-the-board salary increase for

eligible MTSU employees. The salary increase was distributed to all unrestricted and restricted regular full-time and part-time benefit-eligible employees and participants in the post-retirement service program on the payroll as of **June 30**. Each eligible employee received an increase equal to 3 percent of their July 1 salary or \$1,000, whichever is greater. Faculty increases were effective **Aug. 1**. The minimum payment was prorated for part-time employees. These increases will not apply to adjunct faculty, temporary employees, graduate assistants, or student workers. If grant funding becomes available, increases for grant employees will be charged to the appropriate grant, and increases for auxiliary employees will be funded from auxiliary revenues. The state legislation again provided funding to match eligible employees' deferrals in the 401(k) plan, which may be between \$20 and \$50 per month, and for longevity payments at \$100 per year of creditable service up to a maximum number of 30 years.

In addition, the state budget includes **\$9 million in capital maintenance funds** for MTSU for alarm system updates, piping and utility hole replacement, roof replacements, elevator modernizations, and Keathley University Center mechanical and HVAC upgrades. [MTSU](#)



## PRINTING SERVICES

The University's investment in digital printing and a campus-friendly printing services storefront in the Student Union—Blue Print Solutions—are continuing to pay dividends for all campus printing customers, which include students, staff, and faculty.

The University continues to offer the highest print quality available in the marketplace at an affordable cost, a win-win for everyone on campus. Coupled with these attributes, our Department of Printing Services promotes a customer-friendly business culture that focuses on the customers' needs and prompt production of their orders. [MTSU](#)



## A CLASS ACT

Always a teacher at heart, MTSU's **Gloria Bonner** officially retired



from her alma mater in March. With 44 years in education, 32 of which were spent in academic and administrative roles at

MTSU, Bonner wrapped up an extraordinary career by leaving a legacy of leadership, mentorship, passion, and service that few can match. Bonner was the first African-American dean of an academic unit at MTSU (our former College of Education and Behavioral Science).

# PARKING AND TRANSPORTATION

The **Middle Tennessee Boulevard** construction project has reached the halfway point of its three-year lifespan. This joint project between the City of Murfreesboro and the Tennessee Department of Transportation is really starting to take shape as lane-paving, sidewalks, and new traffic signals can be seen between East Main and Bell streets. The work will continue north to the Greenland Drive intersection, and when completed in December 2018, will form a beautiful, tree-lined entry on the western side of campus. Temporary closures and detours may create minor inconveniences, but traffic along Middle Tennessee Boulevard should continue to be one-lane, both north and south, until the project nears its completion.

Here are some other important transportation updates:

- Three large (and much-needed) paving projects were completed for Fall 2017, including the TLC, Distribution, and Greenland A parking lots.
- Future construction plans include a new Parking and Bus Maintenance Facility, as well as additional campus sidewalks, lighting, and pedestrian improvements. [MTSU](#)



The Middle Tennessee Boulevard construction project has reached the halfway point.



Two additional shuttle buses will be added to our Raider Xpress fleet this semester.



The new Parking Access System performed exceptionally well in its first year, allowing commuters faster, hands-free access to our campus garages and arm gates.

## CONSTRUCTION UPDATE

As part of the final construction of the Davis Science and Wisner-Patten renovations, two improvements have been completed. A new Fermentation Lab in Davis 200, serving the new Fermentation Science degree program, is nearing finalization with the installation of equipment, including pot stills, corkers, tanks, and bottle fillers. Six classes will begin the Spring 2018 semester. A major new pedestrian corridor was completed between Todd Hall and the Davis and Wisner-Patten buildings with additional lighting, finishing up the pedestrian improvements around the renovated science buildings.

The schematic design for a new building for the College of Behavioral and Health Sciences is well underway and

is planned for the campus core east of the McFarland Building. The appointed designer is Bauer Askew, and Turner Construction is construction manager/general contractor for the project. The new, three-story building will contain flexible classrooms and labs serving the Psychology, Criminal Justice, and Social Work departments. A capital request for construction will be submitted this year in anticipation of funding in fiscal year 2018–19.

Long-range facilities planning continues for Mathematical Sciences, Engineering Technology, and Concrete and Construction Management. [MTSU](#)

MIDDLE TENNESSEE STATE UNIVERSITY FOOTBALL

#TRUE  
BLUE



2017 HOME SCHEDULE

— HOME OPENER —	SEPT. 2
	
— FAMILY DAY/HOF —	SEPT. 23
	
— HOMECOMING —	OCT. 7
	
— BLACKOUT —	OCT. 20
	
— SALUTE TO VETERANS & ARMED FORCES —	NOV. 4
	
— SENIOR DAY —	NOV. 25
	

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# ADMISSIONS

Our admissions staff works tirelessly to attract the best students to MTSU.

## trueBLUE TOUR

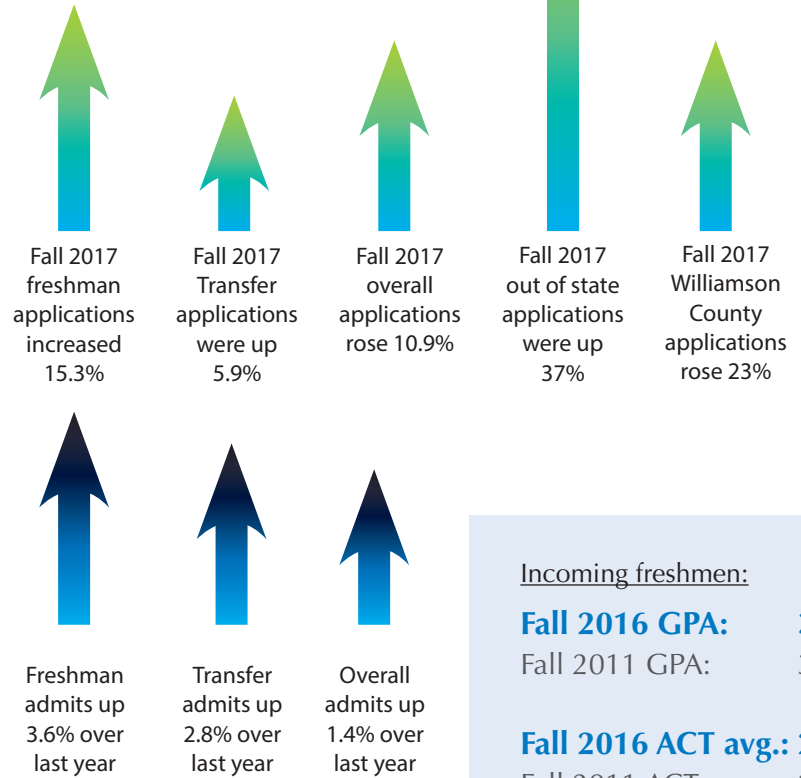
As the Fall 2017 semester begins, the Admissions department has already begun traveling in efforts to attract students for Fall 2018. This past year, **Admissions staff traveled more than 64,000 miles** to share opportunities at MTSU with prospective students and their families.

Again this year, the **True Blue Tour** will highlight our recruitment events. We are adding Birmingham, Alabama, to this fall's tour stops. In total, the tour will visit 12 cities throughout Tennessee, Alabama, Georgia, and Kentucky. University department representatives, advisors, deans, administrators, and student leaders will be on hand at these tour stops to present information about admissions, scholarships, financial aid, and academic programs. Alumni are encouraged to join us to see what's new at their University and to share their experiences with prospective students.



### ADMISSIONS NUMBERS

As of August 1, 2017



## TAKE A CLOSER LOOK

The most influential recruitment activity impacting a student's decision to enroll at an institution is the campus visit. This past year, we had more than 17,000 students and guests join us for the new Campus Tour Experience. Admissions added **live music** by our very own **singer-songwriting students** and a full campus multimedia presentation to our walking tour of campus that includes housing visits. Prospective students are greeted to a warm "True Blue Welcome" as they walk through campus now that they are identifiable as visitors by the blue information bags they use to carry visitor materials. Encourage any high school or transferring student you may know to "Take A Closer Look" with our new Campus Tour Experience!



Campus visitors are identifiable by their blue information bags.



## ACADEMIC AFFAIRS

Our Provost's Office has assigned separate administrators to oversee academics and professors in order to facilitate greater student success. As part of the restructuring process, which does not increase staff size, **Cheryl Torsney** was hired as vice provost for faculty affairs and **Peter Cunningham** was designated vice provost for academic programs.



Cheryl Torsney

Torsney comes to MTSU from the University of Texas–El Paso, where she was previously senior vice provost (2012–15). In her new position, Torsney is responsible for recruitment and

retention of faculty, promotion and tenure, faculty development, and retirement planning at MTSU. She earned double bachelor's degrees in English and French from Allegheny College in Pennsylvania in 1977, her master's degree in English from Louisiana State University in 1979, and her doctorate in English from the University of Florida in 1982.



Peter Cunningham

Cunningham has performed numerous administrative and faculty functions since joining MTSU in 1991. Previous posts include special assistant to the provost for curricular initiatives, associate

dean of the College of Graduate Studies, and professor of Recreation and Leisure Services in the Department of Health and Human Performance. Cunningham will be responsible for oversight of all academic programs and the establishment of new degree programs and serve as the liaison between MTSU and THEC on matters related to academic programs and policies.

Cunningham earned his bachelor's in Health, Physical Education, and Recreation from Austin Peay State University in 1976, his master's in

Recreation and Physical Education from Murray State University in 1977, and his doctorate in Recreation and Park Administration from Indiana University in 1985.

### Several new degree programs have been created:

- B.S. in Fermentation Science
- B.A./B.S. in Religious Studies
- B.A./B.S. in Africana Studies
- B.S. in Dance
- B.S. in Audio Production (from an existing concentration)
- B.S. in Journalism (from an existing concentration)
- B.S. in Video and Film Production (from an existing concentration)
- B.S. in Interactive Media (from an existing concentration)

### Some existing degrees have been extended to online delivery:

- B.S. in Criminal Justice Administration
- M.S. in Criminal Justice Administration

Each of the colleges and academic units at MTSU maintains a high level of activity and produces news worth crowing about. Here are just a few examples.

### Walker Library

- established Makerspace service—a first among Tennessee academic libraries. A section of the library's Digital Media Studio, the Makerspace area provides devices enabling students to design and construct prototypes of projects using 3D filament printers, a 3D resin printer, a laser etcher, CNC machine, a vinyl cutter, virtual reality kits, and more.



### College of Liberal Arts

- established the Department of Global Studies and Human Geography, with David Carleton as interim chair.
- announced new chairs in Art and Design (Nicole Foran), History (Kevin Leonard), and Political Science and International Relations (Michael Federici).



David Carleton



Kevin Leonard

### College of Basic and Applied Sciences

- now offers bottled MTSU Milk on campus and in select community locations.



continued on page 14 ►



Standing (l-r) are state lawmakers Rep. Raumesh Akbari, Rep. Johnnie Turner, Rep. Dawn White, House Speaker Beth Harwell, Sen. Bill Ketron, Rep. Tim Rudd, Rep. Brenda Gilmore, Rep. Harold Love, Sen. Thelma Harper, and Mike Krause, executive director of the Tennessee Higher Education Commission. Seated are Meharry Medical College President James Hildreth (l) and Middle Tennessee State University President Sidney A. McPhee.

**Academic Affairs** *continued from page 13*

- spearheaded an agreement between MTSU and Meharry Medical College to develop an accelerated pathway for talented students to graduate as physicians to serve in rural areas of the state. (See photo above.)
- received a \$10,000 donation from rock band 3 Doors Down's Better Life Foundation for MTSU's Center of Equine Recovery for Veterans program.
- saw MTSU's stock horse team earn second place in a national event and be named Reserve National Champions in the American Stock Horse Association.
- launched an international liquid crystal chemistry research project.

**University College**

- celebrates the 20th anniversary of MTSU Online this fall. By 2016, the number of students in online courses had increased to more than 8,900— from about 2,800 in 2008. On June 1, MTSU Online also earned the Online Learning Consortium (OLC) Exemplary Endorsement, representing

excellence in the administration of online programs. Only four other institutions in the country have earned this distinction.

- saw MTSU ranked among the Top 25 universities nationally by OnlineU for offering great value with its online master's degrees in human resources. MTSU was rated No. 20 for its Master of Professional Studies degree with a Human Resources Leadership concentration.
- is expecting another **record number of students** will participate in dual enrollment (DE) courses in Fall 2017. One of MTSU's major initiatives is to become a leader in this area. In Fall 2014, about 30 high school students were enrolled in MTSU DE courses. This number increased to 405 high school students enrolled in Fall 2015 and 521 DE students enrolled in Fall 2016.
- will celebrate the 10th year of highly successful operations for MTSU's Adult Degree Completion Program in 2017–18. Since the program's inception, **MTSU has become Tennessee's leading producer of adult degree recipients.**

- developed the **award-winning Applied Leadership program** in collaboration with corporate partners to serve the needs of working adults. Now in its second year of operation, that program is gaining a foothold in serving adults preparing for advanced management and leadership positions.
- launched an initiative in Summer 2017 with outreach to more than 3,600 students who left MTSU without completing their degrees. This **Graduate MT** program has been highly successful in drawing students back to the University who had left without finishing their degrees. Since 2015, a total of 255 returning students have complete their degrees under the Graduate MT program.



**College of Education**

- achieved accreditation through June 30, 2022, from the Council for the Accreditation of Educator Preparation (CAEP).
- has served 602 families in 37,683 home visits and has garnered \$6 million external grant funding since Fall 2010 through the college's Home and Community Based Early Intervention Program.
- has conducted more than 2,000 sessions at MTSU's **Center for Counseling and Psychological Services** since 2009, serving approximately 250 clients and partnering along the way with several community nonprofit organizations and Rutherford County Schools to provide counseling services. The center is a place where the real-world experience of meeting with clients trains students for their next

steps and ultimately to fulfill their calling: to help people.

## Honors College

- produced a Goldwater Scholarship winner in Biochemistry major **Kirsten Cunningham**.
- boasts six students who received **NSF-REU** (Research Experiences for Undergraduates) **awards**.
- had an Honors student, **Collin McDonald**, win the national James Rardon Aviation Maintenance Technician Student of the Year Award from the Aviation Technician Education Council.



## College of Behavioral and Health Sciences

- saw 46 **Tennessee Highway Patrol** (THP) Cadets—selected with the help of MTSU’s Center of Organizational and Human Resource Effectiveness (COHRE)—earn their badges June 30 in a graduation ceremony. MTSU COHRE consultants and graduate assistants crafted interview questions, trained interview teams of THP personnel, and designed an interview/testing system.
- is celebrating 50 years of serving the community through MTSU’s **Speech-Language-Hearing Clinic**. The Speech-Language Pathology and Audiology major and the clinic provide a true training ground for students. Before graduating, majors

have worked in the clinic or an off-campus clinic for three semesters. The on-campus clinic will soon be moving to newly renovated space on the bottom floor of Alumni Memorial Gym, thanks to a \$279,067 grant from the Christy-Houston Foundation.

## Jones College of Business

- was awarded the Dale Carnegie Global Leadership Award.
- received a No. 17 national ranking as a top university for aspiring entrepreneurs, according to LendEDU, an online marketplace for student loans. MTSU was the **top Tennessee university on the list** (Belmont was No. 30) and outranked schools such as Penn State, Duke, USC, Ohio State, and Johns Hopkins.

## College of Media and Entertainment

- **ranked No. 1** in a list of the Best 25 Audio Engineering Schools in the U.S. by *Audio Assemble* for the Audio Production program.
- **ranked No.1** in Tennessee by *Animation Career Review* for MTSU’s Animation program. The program also ranked No. 33 nationally in the *Top 50 Public Animation Schools and Colleges in the U.S.* for 2017.
- made *The Hollywood Reporter’s* annual “Top 25 Music Schools”

for the third year in a row. The Department of Recording Industry ranked **No. 18 in the nation**.

- entered into an educational partnership with the Grammy Museum, becoming the only university affiliate in Tennessee and **one of only 10 educational partners in the nation**.
- co-sponsored the “Purple Reign” academic conference in Manchester, England, in May to discuss the cultural impact and legacy left by Prince, who passed away last year. MTSU

## TRANSITIONING HOME

Recent expansion of the Charlie and Hazel Daniels Veterans and Military Family Center will further help veterans—on campus and in the community—in the transition from the military to civilian life. The additional space, donated by MTSU’s Division of Student Affairs, allows the center to match veterans with prospective employers. [MTSU](#)



# MT ATHLETICS

There are many great statistics being produced by our student-athletes on the fields of play. But my favorite statistics are the ones they are producing in the classroom.

In the Spring 2017 semester:

- 163 of 296 (55%) of all student-athletes had a 3.0 or higher GPA
- 99 (33%) of all student-athletes made the Dean's List by earning a 3.5 or higher GPA
- 42 (14%) of all student-athletes had a perfect 4.0 GPA
- 10 of 15 teams had a semester GPA of 3.0 or higher
- Men's tennis had the highest men's team GPA with a 3.743
- Volleyball had the highest women's and overall team GPA of 3.689
- Semester GPA for all student-athletes: 2.972
- Cumulative GPA for all student-athletes: 3.081





## Men's Basketball

MTSU was the class of Conference USA all season, and the Blue Raiders beat Minnesota 81–72 to move into the second round of the NCAA Tournament. The March win was MTSU's second in a row in the tournament's first round over a Big Ten team. The Blue Raiders ranked No. 25 in the *USA Today* Coaches Poll, became the fourth school in C-USA history to register 30 wins in a season, and repeated as conference tournament champions.

## Women's Golf

Sophomore **Jenna Burris** earned the Conference USA women's golf individual championship following a dominant 7-under par performance at the Verandah Club in Fort Myers, Florida, in April. Burris finished six strokes clear of the second-place golfer to run away with the title and propel MTSU—the No. 5 seed entering the tournament—to a second-place team finish.

## Baseball

The Atlanta Braves drafted senior shortstop **Riley Delgado** in the ninth round with the 260th pick in the major league baseball draft June 13. Delgado is one of five Blue Raiders to be selected in the top 10 rounds since 2005. The Miami native led the team in 2017 with 82 hits (19th in the nation), 108 total bases, 41 runs, and 26 multi-hit games.

## Men's Golf

The MTSU men's golf program earned an at-large bid to the **NCAA Regionals** in May. The Blue Raiders were one of 13 teams participating in the regional at The Grove in nearby College Grove, hosted by the Blue Raiders.

## Indoor Track

Conference championship title No. 50 for legendary coach **Dean Hayes** came on Feb. 19, as the MTSU men's indoor track team captured its **first C-USA indoor crown** since joining the league in 2013. Hayes was named **C-USA Indoor Coach of the Year** following the meet, while **Kigen Chemadi** was tabbed the league's Freshman of the Year.

## Men's Tennis

For the first time in program history, the Blue Raiders men's tennis team was honored with the **Intercollegiate Tennis Association (ITA) Community Service Award** for the Ohio Valley Region. Coach Jimmy Borendame's squad participated in a wide variety of activities in the community this past season.

## Women's Basketball

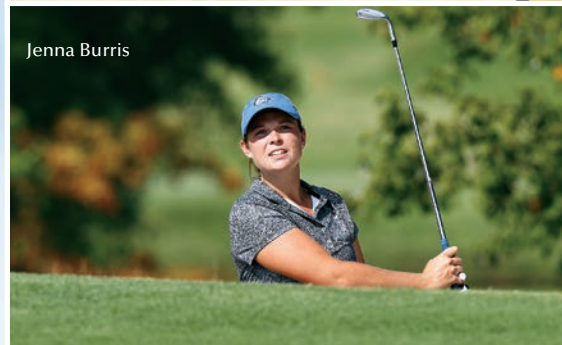
MTSU's **Rick Insell** was inducted into the **Women's Basketball Hall of Fame** in June. Insell is the program's all-time winningest coach and holds the record for most Class AAA high school state championships in Tennessee with 10.

## Softball

MTSU junior outfielder **Precious Birdsong** was named one of the 14 Conference USA student-athletes to receive the **Spring Spirit of Service award**. The honor recognizes the league's student-athletes who contribute to the community through service project efforts, good academic standing, and participation in their respective sport. [MTSU](#)



Jenna Burris



Riley Delgado



Rick Insell

# GRADUATE STUDIES/RESEARCH

The College of Graduate Studies released its Strategic Plan 2018–22. Goals include:

- 10 percent more graduate students (total)
- 10 percent more domestic graduate students
- 10 percent more international graduate students
- 10 percent more out-of-state graduate students

As all of you well know, increasing graduate student enrollment helps strengthen MTSU’s position as a publicly funded research university; enhances MTSU’s reputation as a research institution from both faculty and students’ points of view; meets market need for a more educated workforce in Tennessee, within the region, and nation; and increases revenue from both tuition and fees and the state funding formula. The goals will be achieved by recruiting to existing graduate programs with capacity, developing new graduate programs, and other efforts.

Other graduate studies highlights include but are not confined to:

- the planned launch of a revamped research magazine this fall
- Minds of Middle—Deans’ Tailgate, with food, music, games, and graduate program information, at all home games this football season (See below.)
- a targeted international recruiting focus—specifically on China and India—through digital and social media marketing and education fair and school visits by a graduate recruiter

- rollout of Hobsons Radius Customer (prospective student) Relationship Management software to graduate programs for communication plans for each program, including social media channels
- digital media campaigns for two graduate programs per college from September to January
- greater promotion of MTSU’s Accelerated Bachelor’s-to-Master’s programs, wherein top performing students can earn two degrees in five years
- graduate school information sessions in the Student Union this fall

## Research

During fiscal year 2017, MTSU faculty and administrators received **59 new grants and contracts for externally funded research, service, and instructional activity**, with a cumulative lifetime award value of \$9,646,774. Our total portfolio value for all 187 awards that were active during fiscal year 2017 was **\$31,835,888**.

Just one example is a project by **Joan McRae** (Foreign Languages) titled “Graduate Assistantships in Areas of National Need: Fellows for Foreign Language and Literatures,” for \$443,052 through the U.S. Department of Education. The main objective of this project is to increase the number of high-quality teachers of foreign languages in Tennessee and contiguous states. [MTSU](#)



Joan McRae

I AM **true** BLUE™

You’re invited!

Please join us for food, fun, and entertainment.



RSVP preferred, but not required.  
Email [graduate@mtsu.edu](mailto:graduate@mtsu.edu)

## FALL 2017 HOME SEASON

### MTSU vs. Vanderbilt University

9.02.17 Saturday

Sponsor College of Graduate Studies and Vice Provost for Research Office

2:30 p.m. Tailgate begins 7:00 p.m. Game begins

### MTSU vs. Bowling Green State University

09.23.17 Saturday

Sponsor University College

1:30 p.m. Tailgate begins 6:00 p.m. Game begins

### MTSU vs. Florida International University—

MTSU Homecoming

10.07.17 Saturday

Sponsor College of Behavioral and Health Sciences

9:30 a.m. Tailgate begins 2:00 p.m. Game begins

### MTSU vs. Marshall University—MTSU Blackout

10.20.17 Friday

Sponsor College of Media and Entertainment

3:00 p.m. Tailgate begins 6:00 p.m. Game begins

### MTSU vs. University of Texas—El Paso—

MTSU Salute to Veterans and Armed Services

11.04.17 Saturday

Sponsor College of Basic and Applied Sciences

3:00 p.m. Tailgate begins 6:30 p.m. Game begins

### MTSU vs. Old Dominion University

11.25.17 Saturday

Sponsor College of Education

9:30 a.m. Tailgate begins 2:00 p.m. Game begins



## INTERNATIONAL EDUCATION

In recent years, MTSU has increased our international undergraduate and graduate student enrollment, expanded our study abroad opportunities, and developed more faculty and student exchanges. We also have sought out and signed numerous student exchange and research collaborations with international partners. Here are just a few examples of our high levels of activity on a global scale.

- During 2016–17, we had **23 MTSU Signature faculty-led programs** that served a total of 233 students. Approximately 70 percent of our students studying abroad participated in one of these Signature programs. Locations included Argentina, Belize, Brazil, Canada, China, Costa Rica, Cuba, Dominican Republic, England, Finland, France, Ireland, Israel, Japan, Mexico, New Zealand, Russia, Taiwan, and Vietnam.
- This fall, we will see the culmination one of our first 3+1+1 programs with **Guangxi University in Nanning, China**. After four years of planning and preparation by many people on campus, our new incoming Chinese student enrollment is expected to **increase this fall by 108 percent** with the enrollment of this cohort.
- In July, MTSU again played host to a delegation of more than 30 schoolchildren, as well as teachers and administrators, from China's **Dongcheng Educational Group**. It was the sixth in a series of reciprocal visits between the institutions. Dongcheng is an affiliate of **Hangzhou Normal University**, our partner in the creation and operation of the **Confucius Institute** on MTSU's campus. Our partnership with Dongcheng is truly historic, perhaps the only such venture of its kind in the world that combines educational and cultural opportunities for student and teacher participants from both countries. This exchange has been recognized nationally and internationally for excellence.



MTSU

## TECHNOLOGY

Ongoing IT projects taking shape at MTSU highlight our collective focus on student success.

- The outdated, proprietary underlying infrastructure for the **Banner** system—the University's primary information system for student records, admissions, financial aid, finance, human resources, alumni/development, faculty, and course data—was completely replaced with new state-of-the-art physical and virtual servers, networking, and operating systems. All of this has improved data-loading times and scalability, while providing better resiliency in the event of a catastrophic disruption. One example of improved performance is an end-of-term financial aid program that previously took 10–12 hours to complete on the old infrastructure but ran in 22 minutes in May, helping us get information to students more quickly.
- During Spring 2017, ITD worked with the **Media Arts Department** in the College of Media and Entertainment to acquire and install 21 state-of-the-art, **Boxx animation work stations** using 34-inch, curved, high-resolution monitors connected to five dedicated rendering servers. Boxx equipment was used to produce the animation sequences in blockbuster Hollywood movies *Apollo 13* and *Castaway*. At MTSU, animations that used to take hours to be rendered are now completed in just minutes. A very short animation that used to take almost 10 minutes to render now only takes 9 seconds. This allows students time to improve and refine their work and gives instructors more opportunities to teach.
- ITD's **Janae Peterson** was honored by the Tennessee Department of Veterans Services for helping MTSU and other state universities more effectively help student veterans in their ranks. This work helps to identify veterans enrolled at MTSU, find out their needs, and develop programs to help meet those needs. [MTSU](#)

# UNIVERSITY ADVANCEMENT

## Major Gifts

Philanthropy is the lifeblood of the University. Private gifts to the University have a transformative effect on programs and students across campus.

A new institute opening this fall at MTSU—the result of a generous gift to the University—will help students follow in the academic footsteps of the late MTSU graduate and Nobel laureate James Buchanan by exploring the impact of public policy on the economy. The **Political Economy Research Institute**, a joint venture between the Jennings A. Jones College of Business and the University Honors College, is funded by a \$3.5 million, four-year startup grant from the Charles Koch Foundation.

## Partnerships

In 2016, the Office of University Advancement established a new office to foster and strengthen our relationships with the business community. In the past 16 months, that office has achieved the following outcomes:

- currently involved in a partnership or relationship-building process with 65 companies
- introduced all undergraduate colleges to at least one new relevant company during the past 12 months
- brought in new dollars through career fairs, new MT Athletics sponsorships, HackMT, employee participation in courses offered, and in one case, a new software gift
- had 22 companies visit our campus for the first time, with corporate leadership teams meeting our professors and chairs and participating in roundtable discussions about potential collaborations, experiential student learning opportunities, and talent acquisition needs

- strengthened engagement touchpoints, such as
  - using career services
  - participating in campus-wide career and/or department career fairs
  - providing classroom speakers on various topics
  - providing program insight by participating on various advisory boards
  - discussing research opportunities
  - encouraging and enrolling employees in leadership certificate programs
  - hiring professors to teach on-site workshops to workforce groups for professional development
  - marketing internship opportunities to MTSU students
  - hiring MTSU students for full-time career opportunities upon graduation
  - learning about and engaging the Daniels Military and Veterans Family Center for hiring needs
  - committing to attend a home football game Fall 2017 as our guest in the athletic director's suite (nine confirmed companies to date, with several requests still outstanding)



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## True Blue!

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