

NEWS & information

FROM THE PRESIDENT

Dr. Sidney A. McPhee

*Welcome to the
Spring 2016 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.

I also invite you to check out my new blog, available at www.mtsu.edu/President, for updates and information from my office.

True Blue!

DR. SIDNEY A. MCPHEE

FURTHERING THE QUEST

Our ultimate success as educators here at MTSU, I believe, lies in our day-by-day efforts to ensure that every student gets the attention they deserve on their path to earning a degree.

Our unwavering focus on helping individual students overcome obstacles, stay enrolled in classes, and earn college degrees, regardless of the external factors around us, is what I believe will make



us a successful institution today, tomorrow, and in the future.

continued on page 2 ▶

CHANGING TIMES



Gov. Bill Haslam

As most of you are no doubt already aware, Gov. Bill Haslam has proposed sweeping change regarding the governance structure for the six Tennessee Board of Regents (TBR) universities, including MTSU.

The governor wants to remove those universities from under the direct control of the TBR, which has governed them for decades. In TBR's place, new local governing boards would be fashioned that would have decision-making power over such crucial University operations as tuition rates, program enhancements, presidential appointments, and budget control.

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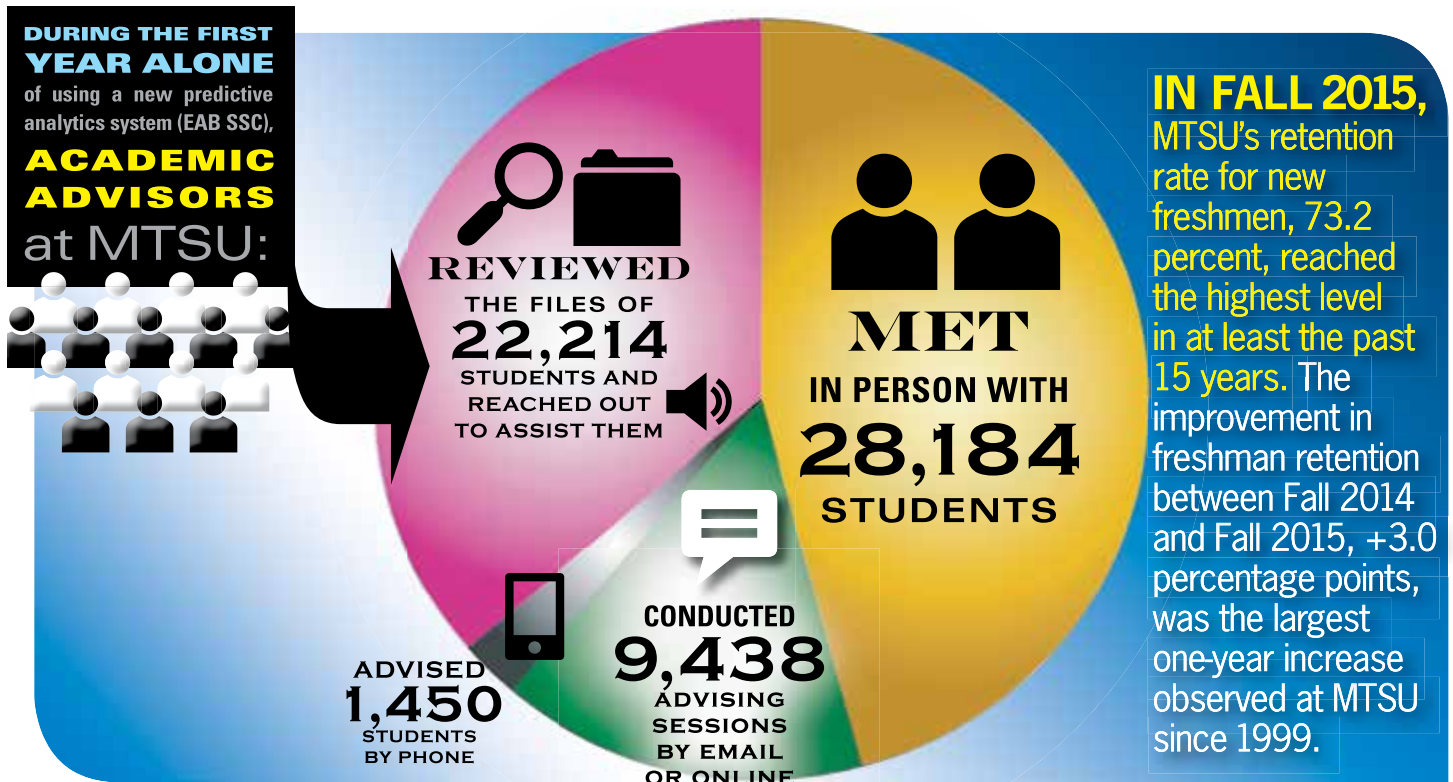
Update on Accreditation 3
Construction Update 4
Veterans and Military Families 6

Budget 8
True Blue Respect 9
2015-2025 Academic Master Plan 10
Fundraising 12

International 14
Graduate Studies 16
Student Life 17
Information Technology 18

Printing Services 19
Athletics 20
True Blue Team Member 24
Admissions 25

Other News and Notes 26
Midpoints 28
MTSU Arts 30



Furthering our Quest *continued from page 1*

A few years ago, MTSU launched a major initiative—the Quest for Student Success. This Quest is designed to ensure that every student who comes to MTSU with the drive to achieve will be met with the best instruction from excellent professors who care for their success. As part of the Quest, University faculty and staff members have also become more flexible and nimble enough to provide extra support and assistance when our students encounter unexpected difficulties or when roadblocks arise that negatively affect their persistence toward graduation. By doing so, we have created a culture of high expectations coupled with personal attention when students struggle inside or outside the classroom.

The following update provides a list of the top 15 recent developments in our Quest. True Blue!

- 1 On January 15, 2016, more than 100 students were welcomed to the REBOUND program. In its second year of operation, REBOUND provides specialized advising and programming to freshmen who earn less than a 2.0 GPA in their first semester of studies. The one-year retention rate for students who participate in REBOUND is 50 percent higher than for students who do not.
- 2 The Scholars Academy continues its tradition of success in serving at-risk new freshmen. In Fall 2014, 113 students entered the program. By Fall 2015, a total of 85 percent of these Scholars Academy students returned to MTSU, a retention rate that easily surpassed new freshmen who

were not a part of the program (73.2 percent). In Fall 2015, the Scholars Academy expanded to serve 167 students. Early indicators show that these students, much like those who participated in earlier programs, continue to excel. About one-quarter were named to the Dean's List, and nearly 50 percent earned above a 3.0 GPA in their first semester of studies.

- 3 MTSU's tutoring initiative continues to evolve to support the academic needs of students. Although the Office of Student Success coordinates tutoring, the real work involved is accomplished by faculty and chairs who recruit, hire, and manage tutors for their individual program areas. In Fall 2015, free tutoring was offered for 187 courses, representing 24 disciplines. In this semester alone, students spent 7,089 hours in tutoring!
- 4 A transformative model of academic advising developed and implemented as part of the Quest has reshaped the student experience at MTSU. This initiative has involved:
 - Selection and appointment of advisor managers for every college
 - Recruitment and appointment of 47 additional advisors to bring the median student-to-advisor caseload to 300/1 or less
 - Creation of work spaces for college advising centers
 - Development of a year-long education and training program to prepare and acclimate advisors to a new student success paradigm
 - Creation and implementation of an advising culture that is student-centered, data-informed, and strategy-driven

continued on page 11 ➤

UPDATE ON ACCREDITATION

The compliance audit for our reaffirmation of accreditation by the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools



Commission on Colleges (SACSCOC) will be submitted in the coming weeks. Importantly, the development of our new Quality

Enhancement Plan (QEP), as part of the reaccreditation process, is well underway. A draft of the plan, branded MT Engage—which was announced in the fall of 2014—is available to the campus community on the QEP web site http://www.mtsu.edu/QEP/submission_draft.php.

As part of the ongoing effort to have broad-based involvement into the plan, I invite faculty, staff and administrators to read the plan to provide feedback to the QEP chair, Dianna Rust, or subcommittee chairs, Jason Vance, Lara Daniel and Michelle Boyer-Pennington. The on-site review of the QEP will be March 29-31.

MT Engage seeks to create a culture in which students become actively engaged in their learning. This will

be accomplished by supporting faculty who seek to incorporate high-impact engagement pedagogies into their teaching. The second key piece of MT Engage is getting students to reflect and think about their learning. Each MT Engage-designated course will require students to complete at least one assignment that fosters integrative thinking and reflection.

Examples of this work will be collected in personalized ePortfolios, which will become showcases for students' integration of the knowledge, skills, and abilities gained during their time at MTSU.

I would like to thank each member of the MT Engage Development Committee for their efforts to create a successful plan that will enhance student's satisfaction with their learning and improve student learning outcomes.



Engage Academically.
Learn Exponentially.
Showcase Yourself.

MTSU IS TOBACCO FREE!

At the beginning of each semester, a time when we have many new students on campus, I think a reminder of our University's tobacco-free policy and its community enforcement is necessary.

Compliance with our tobacco-free policy is not optional. There are consequences for violations. Students in violation will be referred to Judicial Affairs and Mediation Services. Disciplinary sanctions range from warnings or reprimands to suspension or expulsion for the most egregious instances of noncompliance. Faculty and staff who fail to comply will be reported to their supervisors for discipline. Consequences ranging from warnings to unsatisfactory job performance ratings (which will result in denial of any across-the-board state salary increase) will be imposed.

Per the policy, e-cigarettes are also prohibited on campus. Please help ensure clean air for everyone and remind e-cig users of this inclusion when necessary.

Let me conclude by saying that professionals working in Campus Pharmacy and Health Promotion stand ready and willing work with individuals wishing to quit tobacco and nicotine use.

True Blue!



E-cigarettes are included in the tobacco-free campus ban! MTSU



MT
tobacco free

CONSTRUCTION

Numerous campus construction projects are ongoing or were recently completed. Here is a brief update on those recent and current projects.

Davis Science and Wisner-Patten Science

Substantial completion is planned by late fall for this crucial renovation project, costing approximately \$20 million. The new and returning occupants will move in late fall and over the holiday break before the spring 2017 semester. A new connector between the two buildings—the Strobel Lobby—will create a central entrance for both buildings and will provide ADA accessibility within both buildings. The new connector structure is complete, and the exterior skin is being installed.

Wisner-Patten building construction is well underway with finishes beginning. Three-quarters of all mechanical, electrical, and plumbing work is complete in Wisner-Patten, and the new elevators will be installed in February. The lab casework starts this March. Occupants of the buildings will include Physics, Anthropology, and Forensic Science.

Davis Science Building walls are being renovated, and mechanical and plumbing work is about 50 percent complete. Occupants of the buildings will include Academic Advising, Geosciences, and new Mechatronics labs.



Adams Tennis Complex



Adams Tennis Complex

Last summer, the City of Murfreesboro and MTSU officials unveiled the long-anticipated Adams Indoor Tennis Complex, an eight-court facility that greatly enhances the Blue Raider tennis program while increasing playing and tournament opportunities for area residents. The new \$6.2 million, 70,000-square foot complex, located at Old Fort Park in Murfreesboro, is

the latest partnership between the city, MTSU, and the nonprofit Christy-Houston Foundation.

The complex sports eight indoor tennis courts, two electronic scoreboards, a pro shop, and a lounge area with a mezzanine for spectator viewing. The Murfreesboro Parks and Recreation Department operates the facility, allowing Blue Raider tennis practices and matches to take place from November until March while also providing opportunities for the city to host other tournaments throughout the year.

The new facility gives the Murfreesboro community—including MTSU staff and faculty—more opportunities to watch the Blue Raiders in action without traveling to Nashville.

UPDATE



Miller Education Center Renovation

The renovation of the Miller Education Center (MEC), formerly the Bell Street Center, is complete and is open for the start of spring semester. The center is an approximately two-minute drive from the edge of campus, located between Greenland Drive and Bell Street at Highland. New occupants include the Jennings A. Jones College of Business Center for Executive Education, the University College, the Center for Counseling and Psychological Services, and the Center for Chinese Music and Culture.

The Chinese cultural center is the result of a \$1 million grant provided by Hanban Confucius Institute in Beijing, an organization sponsored by China's education ministry that oversees more than 440 institutes in 120 countries. In collaboration with our sister university, Hangzhou, the new center will promote music as a vital element in education and understanding of Chinese people and culture. It will also become another component of our extremely successful international outreach, which has earned MTSU recognition as a leader in global studies.

The MEC renovation includes upgrades to a meeting space on the second floor adjacent to the central atrium. The meeting space will accommodate flexible seminars for 60 occupants, or approximately 145 occupants for special events. In addition, there are offices for University Police and Events Coordination. Site improvements include lighting upgrades in the garage, new lighting in the surface parking lots, and new fencing around the green space, now complete. **MTSU**



Miller Education Center Renovation

Middle Tennessee Boulevard Widening

Construction on the widening of Middle Tennessee Boulevard is starting this January following the award of the construction bid to Jarrett Builders Inc., by the City of Murfreesboro. The project is designed to improve traffic flow and safety along the edge of campus, with the introduction of bike paths, additional signalized crossings at Lytle and Division, improved lighting, and landscaped medians and turn lanes in the center.

Traffic calming features are key components to the project to support pedestrian safety in the area. Pedestrian safety is a paramount concern of the project team, and pedestrians crossing the road are encouraged to exercise extreme caution.

Construction will begin on the section south of the culvert at Sinking Creek. Two-way traffic will be maintained at all times throughout the course of the project, planned for approximately 30 months. Entrances to the campus will be maintained at Greenland Drive, Faulkinberry, and Bell Street.

The City of Murfreesboro and MTSU will provide periodic construction status updates and notifications about any changes to the traffic flow or pedestrian crossings.

Livestock Center Parking Lot

Plans are underway to pave and restripe the Livestock Center parking lot and provide improved traffic and shuttle bus circulation, improved lighting, and drainage in the area, as well as a widened pedestrian walk to the lot. Construction is expected to begin this summer.



We recently opened a Veterans and Military Family Center on campus, which arguably represents the next step in MTSU becoming the most military-friendly university in America.

The new, 2,600-square-foot center constitutes the largest and most comprehensive Veterans and Military Family Center at a university in Tennessee. The center provides one-stop service and support for the more than 1,000 student veterans and their family members at MTSU. Everything that our student-veterans need to succeed is available in this single location, from

scheduling courses and completing government paperwork to getting questions answered about benefits and employment opportunities.

MTSU has been recognized year after year by national publications

such as *Military Times* and *G.I. Jobs* magazine as being one of the top universities in the U.S. for veteran education. *Military Times* separately named the Jennings A. Jones College of Business among its 64 Best for Vets Business Schools 2014.

The University has a long and proud tradition of aiding veterans in their transition from the battlefield to civilian life. In 2011, MTSU became the first institution of higher education in the state—and one of the first in the country—to partner with the Veterans Administration’s new VetSuccess on Campus program.

MTSU’s new senior advisor for veterans and leadership initiatives, Keith M. Huber, now leads our ongoing push to help student veterans

be successful in college. Huber joined MTSU after retiring as a lieutenant general from the U.S. Army after nearly 40 years on active duty as an infantry and Special Forces officer. In his words, this new center will encourage and facilitate the success of our veterans as they transition out of uniform into academics, and then into future employment opportunities, as they strive to become leaders in the community much like they were in uniform.

The University also named Dr. Hilary Miller, a military spouse and family member, as director of the Veterans and Military Family Center earlier this summer. She will lead an experienced staff alongside U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs employees Heather Conrad with VetSuccess on Campus and Veteran Affairs Coordinator Ray Howell. A Veterans Administration mental health counselor will also be in-house to help veteran students and their families cope with post-war traumas, such as post-traumatic stress disorders.

MTSU’s vet-friendly initiatives, as well as this new center, have received a lot of support from both the private and public sectors. Gov. Bill Haslam recently announced that MTSU would receive a \$91,000 state grant to support its vet-success efforts. Also, the Journey Home Project, co-founded by country music legend Charlie Daniels, recently committed \$50,000 to help equip the new center. Mr. Daniels is anxious to see this center in action, and referred to it as a place where the many needs of our veterans can be dealt with by capable people who care. That’s not just True Blue.

That’s red, white, and **True Blue!**



Sidney A. McPhee and Charlie Daniels



Guests and dignitaries cut the ribbon outside the Veterans and Military Family Center.

With plenty of fanfare—including a \$50,000 boost for technology from legendary country music entertainer Charlie Daniels, a visit by U.S. Veterans Affairs deputy secretary Sloan Gibson, and many others—the University opened its new center in November 2015 grand style with a ribbon-cutting followed by a program in front of an overflow crowd in the KUC Theater.

Gibson told student-veterans “Americans support you and clearly the people of Tennessee support you. They want all veterans to be successful...Future employers, embrace veterans. It’s both the right thing and the smart thing. I salute every veteran seeking an education.”

Tennessee Board of Regents Chancellor John Morgan said the center “establishes a new standard for serving our student-veterans, a population that deserves our support and respect...By providing our student-veterans with the care and service that they require to reach their higher-education goals, we are also making strides toward the governor’s goal of 55 percent of our population having some post-secondary credential.”

In addition to state legislators, dignitaries included Many-Bears Grinder, retired U.S. Army colonel and Tennessee Department of Veterans Services commissioner; Terry “Max” Haston (’79), adjutant general for the state of Tennessee; Evan Cope, Tennessee Higher Education Commission chair; Edna M. MacDonald, director of the Nashville regional office for the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs; Mike Krause, executive director of the governor’s Drive to 55 initiative; Russ Deaton, THEC interim executive director; and other THEC and Veterans Affairs officials. [MTSU](http://www.mtsu.edu)

Hilary Miller, Evan Cope, Russ Deaton, Executive Director of the Tennessee Higher Education Commission, Sidney A. McPhee, MTSU President, Charlie Daniels, and LTG (ret) Keith M. Huber by the plaque declaring MTSU military friendly.



**MIDDLE
TENNESSEE**
STATE UNIVERSITY.

**Veterans and Military
Family Center**

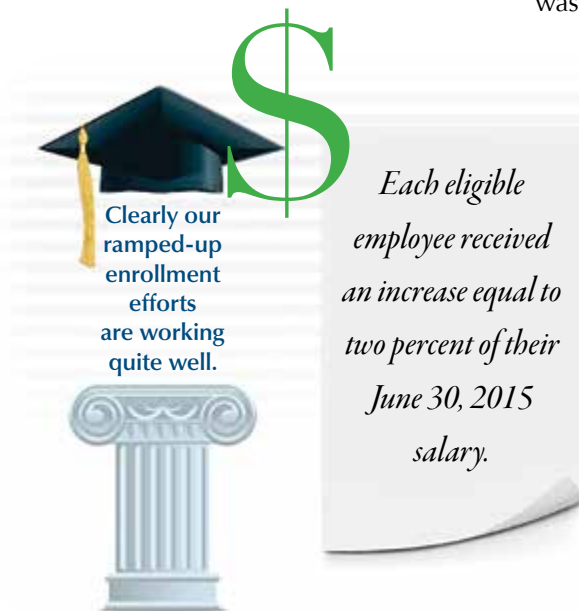
BUDGET

MTSU remained relatively flat year-over-year in enrollment this fall (.96 percent headcount and 1.98 percent full-time equivalent decrease). This slight decrease equated to an approximate \$1.9 million revenue reduction. However, the two previous fall decreases were 4.82 percent and 5.96 percent respectively, so clearly our ramped-up enrollment efforts are working quite well. This slight decrease is even more impressive given that this was the first fall for the Tennessee Promise scholarship and mentoring program, which provides students a last-dollar scholarship, meaning the scholarship will cover tuition and fees not covered by the Pell grant, the HOPE scholarship, or Tennessee Student Assistance Awards funds. My thanks again to everyone on staff who works so hard on enrollment efforts at our University each and every day.

New revenues from tuition increases equated to approximately \$5,270,000. Our net increase in state appropriations (outcomes formula adjustment and new funds for outcomes improvement) was \$1,247,300. These new funds were allocated to the following:

- MTSU portion of two percent pool salary increase;
- faculty promotions;
- increased cost of software maintenance agreements;
- utility and operations/maintenance cost increases;
- scholarships, tuition discounts, employee fee waivers and dependent discounts, and graduate assistant fee waivers;
- funding for college deans' requests for continuing improvements on the MTSU Quest for Student Success initiatives; and
- student tutoring/supplemental instruction and dual enrollment instruction.

Looking toward fiscal year 2016–17, MTSU's share of the Tennessee Higher Education Commission's outcomes formula adjustment will be a decrease of \$1,021,100. However, THEC voted at its November 2015 meeting to propose new state funding totaling \$40.9 million for the higher education formula institutions. MTSU's share of the proposed new funding will be \$3,908,400. Thus, MTSU's state funding could actually increase by \$2,887,300.



The commission also voted to recommend \$12.54 million in capital maintenance funds for MTSU projects, which include Peck Hall HVAC, stairwell, and flooring restoration; Saunders Fine Arts HVAC updates; exterior building repairs to several buildings; domestic water-sewer systems updates; building automation system control panel replacements for several buildings; electrical updates; and energy recovery boiler repair. No MTSU capital project was proposed for new capital outlay funding for 2016–17.

THEC's recommendations have been submitted to the Department of Finance and Administration for consideration in the proposed state budget that Gov. Bill Haslam will be submitting to the

state legislature in the coming weeks. At that point, we will have more information regarding our likely 2016–17 state appropriation.

Salary

In September, 2015, the Tennessee Board of Regents took formal action to approve a two percent Cost of Living Adjustment (COLA) across-the-board (ATB) salary increase for 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, 2015. Each eligible employee received an increase equal to two percent of their June 30, 2015 salary or \$750, whichever was greater. The minimum payment was prorated for part-time employees. Increases for grant employees were part of the salary adjustments, and their increases were charged to the appropriate

grant (increases for auxiliary employees were funded from auxiliary revenues). All increases were effective in the October 2015 pay period but included retroactive pay to July 1, 2015.

Unfortunately, due to limited funds available, those increases did not apply to adjunct faculty, temporary employees, graduate assistants, or student workers. It is my sincere hope that as resources become available, we will be in a position to address these very important groups of employees.

Please know how much I value each of you and appreciate your good work. I was grateful that we were able again to give some salary increases to our employees. **MTSU**

trueBLUE RESPECT



True Blue Respect is a student-focused campaign that reinforces community standards. I want to remind you that two of those standards involve the proper use of golf carts on campus and our ongoing push to keep our campus clean and beautiful.

Golf Cart Etiquette

With the start of fall classes, pedestrian and motorized traffic increases significantly throughout campus. That includes the use of golf carts, which are now included in the types of vehicles regulated by the University.



Anyone who is responsible for or drives an MTSU golf cart can check the Environmental Health and Safety (EHS) website, www.mtsu.edu/ehs, for instructions on complying with the golf cart guidelines. Examples of some of the guidelines include the following:

- Drivers should travel on campus roadways and designated routes when possible.
- Drivers are to slow down or stop at blind intersections.
- Drivers are to drive carefully, be courteous, and yield to pedestrians.
- Passengers must ride in a passenger seat with limbs inside the cart.
- Keys must not be left in parked carts.
- Lock down the cart to protect it from theft.

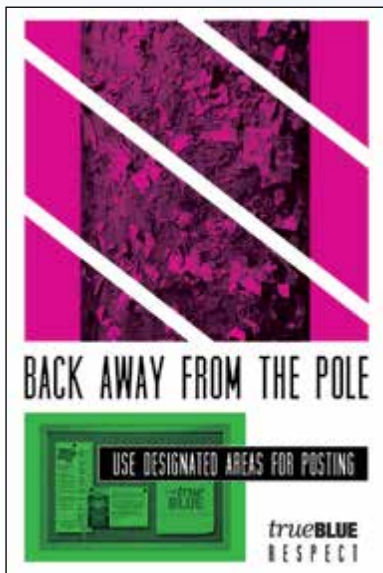
A map of preferred golf cart routes is also on the EHS site.

Clean Campus Crew

Keeping our campus beautiful is a point of school pride for the Clean Campus Crew. The crew serves in conjunction with Facilities Services, which maintains the grounds of the entire University. These dedicated students are chosen to participate in a program that provides them with a work-study opportunity that includes the waiver of some tuition and fees.



One area in which the crew has helped significantly is in removing unauthorized signage that creates visual clutter and eventually litter. That willingness to spend time to help beautify our campus is an indication of school pride—or what we sometimes refer to as “Respecting the Blue.” MTSU



2015–2025 MTSU ACADEMIC MASTER PLAN LAUNCHED

A new master plan for the University was published in December 2015 to guide the academic mission of MTSU over the next decade. With an emphasis on people and programs,



The Reach to Distinction: Academic Master Plan 2015–2025 asserts the University's commitment to **promote engagement**, foster **academic community**, and innovate for **effectiveness and efficiency** in pursuit of its goals to advance **academic quality**, promote **student success and individual responsibility**, and develop **partnering relationships and outreach**.

In Fall 2013, I created the Academic Master Plan (AMP) Committee, consisting of faculty, administrators, staff, students, alumni, and community partners. On February 18, 2014, I charged the committee with revisiting the current master plan, Building on the Blueprint for Excellence, and recommending strategic directions and strategies for academic quality, student-centered learning, and partnerships to guide the University over the next decade.

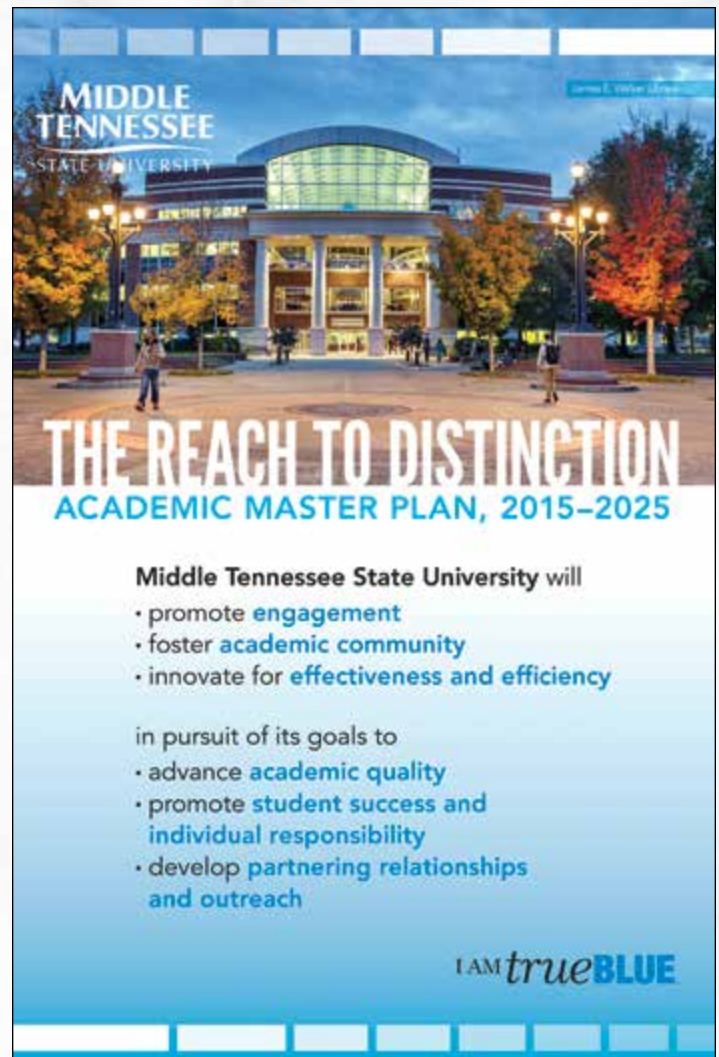
With a focus on initiatives intended to promote collaborations and partnerships based on the University's distinctive strengths, the committee developed priorities in alignment with Governor Bill Haslam's Drive to 55 initiatives. The first is designed to increase the number of Tennessee citizens with a post-secondary certificate or degree, and the second, following the Complete College Tennessee Act of 2010, mandates that state appropriations be based on success in retention and graduation rates rather than enrollment.

I appointed Philip Phillips (associate dean, University Honors College) to serve as chair of the AMP Committee. Zeny Panol (associate dean, College of Media and Entertainment) was vice chair of the AMP Committee; Mary Hoffschwelle (History) chaired the Quality Subcommittee; Bud Fischer (dean, Basic and Applied Sciences) served as chair of the Student-

Centeredness Subcommittee; and David Foote (associate dean, Jones College of Business) chaired the Partnerships Subcommittee. A full roster of committee members is available online at <http://www.mtsu.edu/AMP/roster.php>. The AMP Committee completed its work on schedule in March 2015.

The Reach to Distinction new academic plan also drives the Facilities Master Plan and MT Engage, MTSU's *Quality Enhancement Plan* or QEP (see related story on reaccreditation). The *2015–2025 Academic Master Plan* reinforces and supports the University's Quest for Student Success initiative, now in progress. Posters emphasizing the strategic directions and goals of the plan are on prominent display throughout the campus.

For more information about *The Reach to Distinction*—please visit the AMP website at <http://www.mtsu.edu/AMP/>. A full-text version of the *2015–2025 Academic Master Plan* is available online at: www.mtsu.edu/AMP/docs/MTSUAcademicMasterPlan.pdf.



- 5 During the first year alone of using a new predictive analytics system (EAB SSC), academic advisors at MTSU:
 - Met in person with 28,184 students
 - Conducted 9,438 advising sessions by email or online
 - Advised 1,450 students by phone
 - Reviewed the files of 22,214 students and reached out to assist them
 - Altogether, made 63,945 contacts with students
- 6 Within the first six months of implementing both this new advising model and the predictive analytics system:
 - MTSU was recognized as a top user among the more than 170 universities using the EAB SSC system.
 - Advisors focused on basic outreach campaigns—like getting students enrolled for the upcoming semester—that produced significant gains in persistence rates from the Fall 2014 to Spring 2015 semester.
 - Persistence rates increased by 2.2 percentage points for new freshmen, 4.5 points for transfers, and 2.1 points for sophomores.
 - It is estimated that improvements in persistence rates for the first semester alone resulted in the generation of an additional \$1.5 million in Spring 2015 tuition and fees.
 - It is estimated that these efforts resulted in retaining an additional 390 students from Fall 2014 to Spring 2015.
- 7 In Spring 2015, more than 2,500 students were surveyed about their experiences with academic advising at MTSU. The results were compared to a survey conducted of the undergraduate population exactly two years prior. Student opinion of advising experiences were significantly higher in 2015 as compared to 2013, especially on items that included:
 - Willingness to discuss problems
 - Responds in a timely manner
 - Is approachable and easy to talk with
 - Is available when assistance is needed
 - Is helpful in clarifying life and career goals
 - Is helpful in obtaining tutorial assistance
 - Is helpful in improving study habits
 - Is helpful in selecting a major
- 8 During the Spring 2015 semester, advisors managers, chairs, program coordinators, and faculty went through a careful process to identify “success markers” for more than 150 undergraduate programs. This involved a thorough assessment of each program area’s most predictive courses, establishing grade thresholds for these courses, and determining sequences for course completion. Success markers have been entered into and are active in the EAB SSC system. These markers enable the identification of students who are at-risk or off-track in completing degree requirements.

Academic advisors use these success markers in conjunction with risk prediction to conduct outreach campaigns to assist students.

- 9 Over the past three years, a total of 28 MTSU gateway, high-enrolled undergraduate courses have been redesigned. All 10 of MTSU’s most predictive and most enrolled courses have been redesigned. The redesign of courses, in every case, has led to increases in rates of success for students.
- 10 In Fall 2015, MTSU’s retention rate for new freshmen, 73.2 percent, reached the highest level in at least the past 15 years. The improvement in freshman retention between Fall 2014 and Fall 2015, +3.0 percentage points, was the largest one-year increase observed at MTSU in at least the past 15 years.
- 11 Although Spring 2016 census data will not be available until later in the semester, trends show that persistence (the percentage of students who started in Fall 2015 and return in Spring 2016) continues to increase—in every category! Although Spring 2015 was a record year for student persistence, trends suggest continued persistence



increases across all student categories for Spring 2016.

- 12 Raider Learning Communities (RLCs) were re-invigorated for the Fall 2015 semester, with 28 paired courses offered to serve students. Pairings of courses were predicated on the analysis of course offerings data from previous semesters. Faculty members were encouraged to consider participating in an RLC. Professional development support including readings and a retreat were provided to RLC faculty. Analysis of student experiences and performance outcomes is underway.
- 13 In the past six months MTSU has participated in limited-invitation convenings to discuss the future of higher education and student success initiatives, including:
 - In December 2015 in Indianapolis at the invitation of the Lumina Foundation

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**HIGHLIGHTS OF
 SPRING 2016**

HOW TO FIND THESE EVENTS
 AND MANY OTHERS:

12/11: NATIONAL EXHIBITION
 OF SMALL-SCALE WORKS OF ART
 JANUARY 10 - FEBRUARY 10, 2016
 MTSU OPERA, THE TENDER LAND
 BY EDWIN COPPIN
 MARCH 10 AND 11, 2016

MTSU DANCE PRESENTS
 COMPOSITIONS
 WINTER 15 - SPRING 16, 2016
 WEST SIDE STORY
 MARCH 10 - 11, 2016

MIDDLE
 TENNESSEE
 STATE UNIVERSITY

I AM **trueBLUE**

WWW.MTSUARTS.COM



continued on page 12 >

Furthering our Quest *continued from page 11*

- In October 2015 in Indianapolis as a panelist at EDUCAUSE, sponsored by the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation
- In September 2015 in Seattle at the invitation of the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation

14 MTSU has become recognized regionally and nationally by media outlets, national organizations, and other universities for using fundamental best practices to increase student success rates.

- MTSU was featured in the March 13, 2015 edition of the *Chronicle of Higher Education*, and MTSU's efforts were pointed out in the *Washington Post* on June 14, 2015.
- In August 2015, MTSU was identified as one of five finalists nationwide for the prestigious and highly competitive 2015 Project Degree Completion Award from the Association of Public and Land Grant Universities (APLU). The award recognizes high-performing institutions for exemplary student success initiatives to improve retention and degree completion.
- In September 2015, EDUCAUSE announced 24 recipients of iPASS (Integrated Planning and Advising

for Student Success) grants. MTSU was selected to receive \$225,000 over the next three years to fund a portion of the SSC Campus and DegreeWorks initiatives. Institutions had to be invited in order to make application for the highly competitive grants. And, of course, competition was stringent among those who submitted proposals. With funding provided by the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation, iPASS grants are intended to promote and enhance the ability of leading institutions to graduate more students.

- In October 2015, MTSU was presented with the Data Driven Impact Award by the Education Advisory Board, a consulting group specializing in student success. MTSU was one of three universities to receive an award. In MTSU's case, the award was in recognition of the University's use of data to inform decisions that improve the success of students.

15 In August 2015, MTSU academic advisors received my Annual Student Success Award. The award included \$25,000 in recurring funds to support professional development needs of advisors. **MTSU**

UNIVERSITY ADVANCEMENT REPORT

The end of 2015 marked the successful conclusion of our Centennial Campaign. I want to take a moment to congratulate the many members of our University community who contributed to our success. This campaign has helped transform our campus, positively impacting almost every corner of our enterprise. Most importantly, it has provided our students and faculty with resources that enable them to achieve their fullest potential—in our classrooms and laboratories, on the athletic fields, and in our community.

I look forward to our Campaign Celebration, February 12, when we will announce the final results of this historic effort. In

the meantime, my sincerest thanks to our Advancement Staff, our Campaign Executive Committee and volunteers, and our campus leadership for their

many contributions and commitment over the past few years. **MTSU**



According to Gov. Haslam, this proposed major structural change would be engineered, in part, to better allow the TBR to focus on the state's community colleges and Colleges of Applied Technology, which have experienced dramatic enrollment increases as a result of the Tennessee Promise scholarship. The Tennessee Promise program offers eligible high school graduates two years of tuition-free community or technical college. (The Promise contributed to a 10-percent surge in first-time freshman enrollment statewide, a key development in Gov. Haslam's Drive to 55 education initiative to raise the number of Tennesseans possessing postsecondary degrees or certification to 55 percent in order to meet future workforce demands.)

At the time of the writing of this report, there was still much unknown and undecided about the proposed new higher-education landscape that would be created under this new governance structure. The governor had appointed a task force to fine-tune his plan to create individual governing boards for the six affected Tennessee universities, and I was selected (along with the other presidents of universities currently governed by the TBR) to serve on that committee.

This proposed new governing structure, I believe, has great potential to enable MTSU to tackle its present and future

challenges in an even more laser-focused manner. It could do so by granting the University both greater local autonomy in its decision making, as well as greater freedom to think entrepreneurially and even outside the box as regards the need for program enhancements and new initiatives. With the work MTSU has already been accomplishing over the past few years, specifically as it relates to attracting more college-ready students (including transfer students) to campus, I am confident that such a truly bold and potentially transformational proposal would lead to an even brighter future for our University. I look forward to learning and exploring the opportunities it could provide towards our mission of ensuring student success and providing even more graduates for the state's workforce.

In a related matter, John Morgan, chancellor of the Tennessee Board of Regents, announced his plan to retire at the end of January. David Gregory, who had planned to retire in January as TBR's vice chancellor for administration and facilities development, was named acting chancellor and will serve until a permanent replacement is selected. Morgan, who has served as chancellor of the state's university and community college system since October 2010 and led the system's transformation to become more comprehensive and student focused, called the

announcement bittersweet and said it was timed to acknowledge the accomplishments achieved by the system's institutions over the past five years.

Chancellor Morgan's visionary leadership of the Tennessee Board of Regents helped bring about significant reforms and improvements in our state's higher-education system.

That leadership was demonstrated by his able work to guide TBR's institutions during implementation of the Complete College Tennessee Act and Governor Haslam's Drive to 55 initiatives.

As president of MTSU, I have respected and appreciated his counsel and guidance as we secured our \$147 million Science Building, one of the top scientific teaching and research facilities in the nation, and put forward our Quest for Student Success, which has transformed how we teach and serve our students.

I have enjoyed working with the chancellor and, on behalf of our students, faculty, and staff, we thank him for his service to our state and system. [MTSU](#)



John Morgan
Tennessee Board of Regents
Chancellor



David Gregory
Tennessee Board of Regents
Acting Chancellor

PARKING AND TRANSPORTATION SERVICES

We anticipate no major changes in parking for the 2016 Spring term. Additionally, all on-campus transportation routes will remain the same as the Fall semester, and the campus shuttles will continue to run the Fall routes as well.

As also mentioned in the construction update, we do anticipate that the Department of Transportation's upcoming construction project to widen and improve Middle Tennessee Boulevard will have a significant impact on the west side of campus. We expect to have several

lanes compromised until the completion of the project in 2018. Vehicular intersections and pedestrian crossing locations will be maintained and clearly identified to allow safe access, but we encourage all students, faculty, and staff to plan accordingly by utilizing campus entries and exits on Greenland Drive, Rutherford Boulevard, and East Main Street. We will work closely with the contractors to keep campus informed of all traffic pattern changes as the project progresses. [MTSU](#)



INTERNATIONAL REACH

During the past few years, the University has increased its international undergraduate and graduate student enrollment, expanded its study-abroad opportunities, and developed more faculty and student exchanges. In 2015 alone, 367 students traveled to 65 countries as a result



Alejandro Paul Pletickosich Picon (left), director of social responsibility and university extension at Universidad Andina Del Cusco, and MTSU President Sidney A. McPhee exchange university hats Saturday while touring the Inca Empire ruins at Machu Picchu, near Cusco, Peru. (MTSU photo by Andrew Oppmann)

of partnerships with fellow universities in Bangladesh, Brazil, China, France, Germany, Hungary, Japan, South Korea, Mongolia, Nigeria, the Philippines, Scotland, Thailand, Taiwan, and Vietnam.

MTSU has also sought out and signed numerous student exchange and research collaborations with international partners. From an

institutional perspective, the last two years of activity alone in this arena have been nothing short of amazing, and included the following exemplary but not exhaustive list of international exchanges and agreements:

- **Peru**—MTSU forged an exchange agreement with the Universidad Andina Del Cusco, a private university in Peru. It represented the 39th international partnership in 18 countries for MTSU and only the second such tie with an institution in South America. UAC, known best for its programs in tourism, accounting and nursing, is located near the Historic Sanctuary of Machu Picchu, described by *National Geographic* magazine as one of the world’s most important archeological sites. UAC, which has an enrollment of about 15,000 students, has a similar agreement in place with Harvard University.

• **Bahamas**—Both myself and Blue Raiders basketball coach Kermit Davis met with Perry G. Christie, the prime minister of the Bahamas, during the Blue Raider basketball squad’s summer 2015 visit to the island paradise (my native home) to play in three preseason exhibition games at the Commonwealth’s national gymnasium. Prime Minister Christie praised MTSU’s recent accolades for its Quest for Student Success initiative. During the seven-day

trip, I also conferred with several of the country’s other top ministers.

- **International Affairs** enrolled six freshman international students from Montverde Academy in Florida for the fall 2015 semester from a total of 31 admitted students. The pathway program with Montverde Academy, a premier private boarding school known for its strong international enrollment and 100 percent college placement rate, was established in 2014. Montverde educates nearly 1,100 students from pre-K through 12th grade, including more than 350 boarding students between grades 7 and 12 who hail from across the U.S. and 60 countries. It also has made recruitment in China a top priority and has opened an educational center in Shanghai.

- **China**—Efforts included several trips abroad and new partnerships, including:

- The renewal of our Confucius Institute agreement with Hangzhou Normal University.



- Launching a Chinese music and cultural center on University property as a result of a \$1 million grant provided by Hanban Confucius Institute in Beijing. In collaboration with our sister university, Hangzhou, the new center will promote music as a vital element in education and understanding of Chinese people and culture. The 3,200-square-foot center perfectly complements our existing treasure trove of musical assets at MTSU, broadening our



musicology efforts into the realm of ethnomusicology and growing our research footprint to include multicultural musical and cultural studies.

- Teaming with Communication University of China, that nation's top-ranked institution for journalism, communication, film and television, on a student exchange program.
- Furthering our student exchange partnership with Guangxi University, in Nanning China. Two MTSU College of Business professors, Dr. Zhen Li and Dr. Raholanda White, served as visiting professors during the summer of 2015 at this partner university. Both professors taught in support of the 2+2 pathway program MTSU established a few years ago.

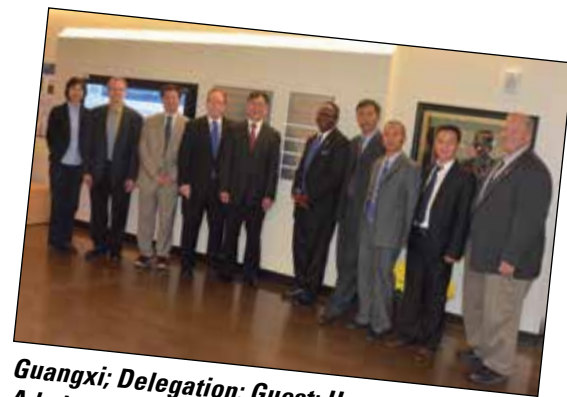


Dr. Zhen Li



Dr. Raholanda White

- Adding an international partner to our burgeoning mechatronics engineering program by signing a memorandum of understanding with Shanghai Polytechnic University, a top Chinese engineering school, enabling student exchange and joint research.
- Signing student exchange agreements with both Shaanxi Normal University in Xi'an and Xiangnan University in Chenzhou.
- Extending the research partnership with Guangxi Botanical Garden of Medicinal Plants in Nanning.
- Hosting China's vice minister of education, Madam Xu Lin, as a 2014 commencement speaker.
- Hosting more than 30 Chinese schoolchildren from Dongcheng Education Group of Hangzhou Normal University in Murfreesboro as part of a reciprocal educational and cultural exchange facilitated by MTSU's Confucius Institute. Previously, Rutherford County schoolchildren, parents, and teachers traveled to six cities in China as part of this ongoing cultural and educational exchange between the two countries. [MTSU](http://www.mtsu.edu)



Guangxi; Delegation; Guest; Homecoming; Administration; McPhee; Chinese; Confucius Institute



Above and below: The MTSU Confucius Institute hosted a delegation of elementary and middle school children and educators from China to develop student exchanges and cultural ties with Tennessee schools.



Lin Zhengfan, Sidney A. McPhee, and Elizabeth McPhee, MTSU First Lady during the Dongchen Education Group educational and cultural exchange closing ceremony



Nicaragua study group.

GRADUATE STUDIES UPDATE

The College of Graduate Studies continues to develop and deliver programs that are of interest and in demand throughout the middle Tennessee area.

This fall witnessed the successful launch of the new Master of Science (M.S.) in Finance and Master of Arts (M.A.) in Liberal Arts; the start of an extensively revised Master of Business Administration (M.B.A.), with new concentrations in Music Business and Healthcare Management, as well as an all online option; and a restructured Healthcare Informatics concentration for the M.S. in Professional Science. This spring will see the start of a new Master of Education (M.Ed.) in Agricultural Education Leadership, with next fall bringing a stand-alone Master of Library Science (M.L.S.) program. Revisions to several programs in Elementary and Special Education as well as the Molecular Biosciences Ph.D. program are also underway.

Working in conjunction with Dr. Tom Brinhaupt and the Learning, Teaching, and Innovative Technologies Center, we established two programs: the GTA Teaching Preparation Certificate Program and a Graduate Education Faculty Learning



Dr. Tom Brinhaupt

Community. Ten students finished the program in the fall, and we are currently taking applications for spring and summer students. Eight faculty members worked on the Graduate Education Faculty Learning Community with concerns and suggestions centering on Graduate Faculty Support and Workload Issues, Graduate Student Mentoring Best Practices, and Graduate Teaching Best Practices.

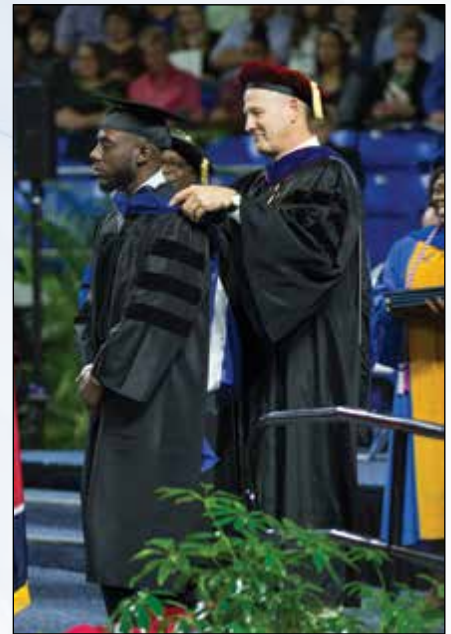
This fall witnessed the graduation of nine doctoral candidates, as well as more than 250 master's and specialist degree recipients. Looking back over 2015, we can see well over 150 publications from MTSU faculty and students, several external grant applications, and a considerably larger number of presentations at a wide range of regional, national, and international conferences. Several students have received awards or were featured presenters, including ones in the Mathematics and Science Education doctoral program (Cicely Woodard, featured speaker at the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation U.S. Education Learning Forum) and Actuarial Sciences master's program (Kim Page, honorable mention at the 50th Actuarial Research Conference held in Toronto). Additionally, Dr. Saeed Foroudastan was awarded the President's Award at the recent 6th Annual National Professional Science Master's Association conference in



Dr. Saeed Foroudastan

Washington, D.C. for his efforts on promoting and developing Professional Science Master's programs at MTSU and across the country. We also witnessed an increase in the number of students accepted into graduate programs at MTSU for spring 2016.

The graduate programs and their students and faculty continue to be very active in pushing forward the boundaries of their disciplines and progressing toward graduation. [MTSU](#)



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STUDENT LIFE

I often state that college life is more than just books and classrooms. The formula for student success involves more than just ensuring students make it to class, too.

Research bears out that the first six weeks of a semester are critically important for student success. Students need to connect academically in the classroom, and they also need to connect socially outside the classroom in order to feel like they belong at MTSU.

Connection Point:

- The Connection Point program entered into its third year during fall 2015 with an eclectic slate of events offered to our entering freshman students. This program is becoming so popular that it is now common to receive requests from faculty and staff to host their own Connection Point events. While geared toward freshmen, upper-class students have also taken advantage of attending many of the programs. The goal of Connection Point is to connect students with out-of-classroom opportunities in an effort to contribute to students' satisfaction with college life and in turn increase retention and graduation rates.
- Over 70% of our first-semester freshmen participated in the program during fall 2015

- The program expanded to the spring semester for the first time during spring 2015. When combining fall 2014 and spring 2015 participation levels, over 80% of freshmen participated! Visit www.mtsu.edu/connection for a list of our spring 2016 program offerings.

Additional Student Life Updates:

- MTSU will celebrate Black History Month in February, which will feature keynote speaker Stephen A. Smith. Smith is a commentator on ESPN's *First Take*, frequently appears on *SportsCenter* as an analyst, and has a weekly radio show, *The Stephen A. Smith Show*. Smith is also a columnist for *The Philadelphia Inquirer*. He will speak at 7:00 p.m. on February 17 in the Student Union Ballroom.
- March is National Women's History Month and will feature keynote speaker, Donna Brazile. Brazile is the current vice chair of the Democratic National Committee and served as the interim chair for a brief time in 2011. Brazile was the first African American to direct a major presidential campaign when she served in this capacity when Al Gore ran for president in 2000. Brazile appears as a weekly commentator on CNN's *The Situation Room* and serves as a contributor on NPR and ABC News. She will speak at 6:45 p.m. on March 24 in the Tennessee Room of the James Union Building.
- Volunteers are invited to participate in the University's fifth house build in partnership with the Rutherford and Cannon County chapters of Habitat for Humanity. Volunteers can participate in the build starting in February, which will conclude with a house dedication in April to deserving local family. For more information, go to www.mtsu.edu/sos/habitat.php.
- The Office of Fraternity and Sorority Life has a new director. Leslie Merritt will join the staff in mid-January. Merritt has significant experience in Greek life, primarily in her previous role as the director of chapter services for Kappa Delta National Headquarters. She also has extensive local and national presentation experience on Greek-related topics. Merritt is a proud alumnae and Blue Raider, receiving both her bachelor's and master's degrees from MTSU.
- Intercultural and Diversity Affairs also has a new director. Daniel Green joined the Blue Raider family in October. Green previously served as the senior coordinator of multicultural affairs at Tusculum College and brings with him a wealth of knowledge and programming experience that has already benefitted our students. [MTSU](http://www.mtsu.edu)

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INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY UPDATE

Several important IT projects taking shape at MTSU truly highlight our collective focus on student success. Just a few examples include:

EAB SSC Campus

Work continues with the Education Advisory Board (EAB) on the new SSC Campus product, which MTSU is beta-testing with this vendor. SSC Campus will replace the current EAB Advising Platform and will offer true single sign-on, advising and tutoring scheduling, multimodal student communication, and academic alert data. The first phase of the new product will roll out this spring.

Degree Works

Degree Works, a web-based tool to help students and advisors monitor progress toward degree completion, will replace the RaiderNet Degree Evaluation menu option. The



implementation of this new tool began in spring 2015 with a nine-month-long “scribing” process in which the vendor, with MTSU staff guidance, builds thousands of rules about MTSU degree completion for each

of our programs of study. Tentative plans are to roll out the product this spring for an initial degree program, find any major flaws, resolve those issues, and then roll out for other degree programs a few months later.

Radius

Radius is a new Constituent Relationship Management (CRM) product being implemented for undergrad and

graduate admissions recruitment and prospective student communication. Graduate admissions staffers are also exploring the use of the product for admissions applications and committee review use. Planning for implementation started in late fall 2015. Target milestone and implementation dates are almost set and should occur this year.

MT Engage/QEP ePortfolio and Instructional Design

Instructional support staffers are gearing up to support the ePortfolio and instructional design components of MT Engage, MTSU’s Quality Enhancement Plan (QEP). The new D2L integrated ePortfolio tool will soon be available to the campus community for use with MT Engage courses, as well as other courses. The ePortfolio will act as a collection tool from which a variety of presentations (e.g., for perspective employers, continuing education, personal displays) can be created. A launch and support plan, which will include online materials and workshops, is under development.

A main tenant of MT Engage is for faculty to integrate high-engagement pedagogies into the learning environment, along with creating assignments that promote reflective thinking. Instructional support staff, who are from both the Faculty Instructional Technology and the Learning, Teaching, and Innovative Technologies Centers, are currently working on preparing workshop, seminar, and consultation materials to assist faculty in course redesign efforts that will make those types of teaching/learning methods and assessments an integral part of an MT Engage course. Development opportunities will be available for faculty members to learn what high-engagement pedagogies are and how they can be integrated in any discipline’s courses. [MTSU](#)

A main tenant of MT Engage is for faculty to integrate high-engagement pedagogies into the learning environment, along with creating assignments that promote reflective thinking.

PRINTING SERVICES

Printing Services' two locations have experienced dramatic increases in orders during the first half of the 2015–16 academic year.



The Greenland Drive facility, geared toward medium-to-large color publication

orders, and the Blue Print Solutions retail site in the Student Union, focused on smaller orders and a wide range of specialty large-format projects, are working at record-setting levels. The amount of orders produced in both locations is clear evidence that our Printing Services operation is connecting very well with our students and faculty.

As always, the department pays special attention to its pricing structure to be

sure the campus community is getting the best value for its purchase.

I can tell you from personal experience that the Printing Services staff takes great pride in seeing their efforts support students and faculty academic work, as well as the academic mission of the University. This is truly a True Blue operation!

Orders and inquiries concerning those orders can be sent to printing.services@mtsu.edu. mtsu.edu



Bumper Crop

U.S. Sen. Bob Corker and Rutherford County Juvenile Court Judge Donna Scott Davenport served as commencement speakers at the December 2015 graduation ceremonies for the estimated 1,833 students receiving degrees. MTSU is the largest supplier of college-degreed graduates in the mid-state, providing the vibrant Music City economy and workforce with more graduates (approximately 4,000 students each year) than all other local universities combined.



Not-So-Secret Garden

MTSU returned a favor to the Guangxi Botanical Garden of Medicinal Plants last fall, affixing a plaque at a special laboratory on campus that recognizes their partnership in the study of ancient Chinese herbal remedies.

President Sidney A. McPhee and Miao Jianhua, director of the southern China garden, added the label of "USA-China Joint Research Center" outside the Tennessee Center for Botanical Medicine Research in MTSU's new \$147 million Science Building. Miao and McPhee dedicated a similar sign outside the Guangxi laboratory about two years ago.

MTSU and the medicinal herb garden, named in 2011 as the world's largest, are partners in an exclusive collaborative agreement to accelerate the development of Western medicines from plant extracts. Garden researchers cultivate and prepare extracts. MTSU scientists, led by professor Elliot Altman, then screen the samples to determine their medicinal promise. About 800 of the more than 7,400 plants at the garden have been shown to have potential in treating a variety of diseases, including 12 with anti-cancer potential, eight with indications of anti-inflammatory properties, and one that may be useful to treat diabetes.



The Athletic Department enjoyed a successful year in Conference USA again in 2015. Here are a few recent achievements by MTSU student-athletes and the athletic program.

Blue Raiders Compete in Popeyes Bahamas Bowl



Ritchie James

On Christmas Eve, Middle Tennessee capped off another strong football season with a trip to Nassau for the 2015 Popeyes Bahamas Bowl. It marked the Blue Raiders' fifth bowl in the FBS era and the seventh time in the last 10 years MTSU has been bowl eligible. The game against Western Michigan was broadcast nationally on ESPN as the Blue Raiders enjoyed beautiful weather and a tremendous experience. On top of that, the Blue Raiders had 20 student-athletes compete in the bowl game who had already received their degree and that ranked fifth-highest in the country.

Other Highlights

During the Fall 2015 semester, 12 of 15 teams had a semester team grade point average of 3.0 or higher; 102 student

athletes made the Dean's List (3.5+ GPA), and 31 had a perfect 4.0. Overall, 175 of 330 student-athletes had a 3.0 or higher (53%).



Seven members of the MTSU softball program were revealed as 2014-15 All-American Scholar-Athletes when the National Fastpitch Coaches Association (NFCA) announced its list in October. **Kelci Cheney, Morgan Harris, Samantha Nieves, Makenzie Prince, Lauren**

At right and below: MTSU vs. Toledo at the 2015 Great Alaska Shootout.



Riddell, Marinna Shadley and Kristin Uselton were each honored by the NFCA for their work in the classroom during the 2014–15 school year. The recognition is earned by holding a GPA of 3.5 or higher throughout the full school year.

Our 2015 Hall of Fame class featured four stars from the past, each rightfully earning the label “champion” during his playing days on campus. Standout tailback **Kippy Bayless**, stellar infielder/slugging slugger **Josh Renick**, nationally ranked track star **Mardy Scales**, and golf legend **Brett Alexander** comprised the 40th class in school history. This elite group was officially inducted on October 17 prior to the FIU football game.

Senior goalkeeper **Kelsey Brouwer** was named to the CoSIDA Academic



Kelsey Brouwer

All-District Second Team in late October. The Franklin, Tenn., native owns a 3.91 GPA in Business Management and was equally impressive on the

field. The senior recorded the most shutouts in a season (nine), and her .870 save percentage is currently the second-highest in school history. **Brouwer** also is only the second MTSU keeper to record 300 saves, completing the feat in her final home contest against Louisiana

Tech on October 25.

Brouwer also was named C-USA Defensive Player of the Year and First Team All-Conference, while soccer teammates



Emily Jorgenson

Cameron Cox and **Emily Jorgenson** earned spots on the All-C-USA Second Team. “We are extremely proud of the recognition that our three players

received, as it speaks to the consistency and effort level with which they have played throughout the season,” head coach Aston Rhoden said. “In a league as strong as C-USA, it is difficult to get everyone recognized, but the most important thing is how much we value the contribution that every player makes to our team.”



Cameron Cox, right

MTSU’s NCAA Graduation Success Rate equaled last year’s school record at 87 percent and was one point higher than the NCAA average, as announced by Director of Athletics Chris Massaro in early November. The Graduation Success Rate (GSR) is a four-year measure of freshmen and athletic transfers who entered the University between the fall semester of 2005 and the spring semester of 2009. This marks the third straight year that MTSU has scored above 80 percent. The last three GSR scores for MTSU have been 87, 87 and 82. We had five programs score a perfect 100 percent GSR score. Men’s basketball, men’s tennis, women’s basketball, women’s tennis, and volleyball all registered a 100 percent score. Women’s soccer added a 95, while softball and women’s track/cross country turned in a 94. The Blue Raiders also ranked third out of the 13 teams in Conference USA, trailing only Charlotte and Rice who both scored 92 percent. However, Charlotte did not have football during this time, so the Blue Raiders ranked second among football-playing members.



Chelsea Ross

Senior volleyball player **Chelsea Ross** was named to the All-Conference USA First Team

continued on page 22 ▶

Kevin Byard celebrates with his teammates MTSU’s 41-7 win over North Texas November 21, 2015.

MT Athletics continued from page 21

for her efforts in 2015. It marked the second year in a row **Ross** has been selected to the team, and the third time in four years that she made a postseason All-Conference Team. **Ross** led the team in kills with 512 and kills per set with 4.70.

The University's all-time interception leader, **Kevin Byard**, accepted an invitation to compete in the Senior Bowl on January 30. Byard, from Lithonia, Ga., will be the first Blue Raider to compete in the Senior Bowl since Tyrone Calico in 2003.

The men's basketball team won the GCI Great Alaska Shootout in late November with three consecutive wins in three days. The Blue Raiders defeated host Alaska-Anchorage, UNC-Asheville, and Toledo to capture the second regular-season tournament title under head coach Kermit Davis. **Perrin Buford**, **Giddy Potts**, and **Reggie Upshaw** were all named to the All-Tournament Team.

Middle Tennessee head coach Rick Stockstill announced permanent captains for the 2015 football team on December 4. This is the ultimate award for the Blue Raider program and is voted on by the student-athletes. Linebacker **T.T. Barber**, safety **Kevin Byard**, offensive tackle **Darius Johnson**, and defensive tackle **Pat McNeil** were honored as the

10th group of permanent captains in the FBS era at Middle Tennessee.

Defender **Emily Jorgenson** and goalkeeper **Kelsey Brouwer**, both seniors, earned spots on the National Soccer Coaches Association of America (NSCAA) All-Central Region Teams. Jorgenson was honored with a spot on the all-region first team, while senior goalkeeper Brouwer received a second-team nod.

Former Middle Tennessee golf standouts **Rick Cochran**, **Chase Narramore**, **Kent Bulle**, and **Jason Millard** earned status on the Web.com Tour for the 2016 season. The tour begins in late January and concludes in December. Also, former women's golfer **Allie Knight** qualified for the Symetra Tour in early December.

Conference USA announced its 2015 All-Conference teams in December, as selected by the league's 13 head football coaches. The University had 13 players recognized with four first-team members, two second-team picks, and five honorable mention selections. The Blue Raiders also placed a record four players on the All-Freshman team. The first-team selections were linebacker **T.T. Barber**, safety **Kevin Byard**, offensive lineman **Jaylen Hunter**, and wide receiver **Richie James**. Second-team

selections for the Blue Raiders were wide receiver **Ed Batties** and defensive back **Jeremy Cutrer**. Honorable mention honorees were long snapper **William Eads**, linebacker **Cavellis Luckett**, defensive tackle **Pat McNeil**, offensive lineman **Maurquice Shakir**, and quarterback **Brent Stockstill**. **James**, **Stockstill**, linebacker **Darius Harris**, and offensive lineman **Chandler Brewer** were honored on the All-Freshman team.

Quarterback **Brent Stockstill** was voted Conference USA's Freshman of the Year. He is the first Blue Raider to earn the honor.

James and **Stockstill** were both recognized as Freshmen All-Americans by Athlon Sports on December 23. **James** earned his second First Team Freshman All-American honor this year, while **Stockstill** was a second-team pick. **James**, from Sarasota, Fla., turned in the best season of any freshman in Conference USA history with a school-record 108 receptions for 1,346 yards and six touchdowns. Earlier, **James** was voted to *USA Today's* Freshman All-American team. **Stockstill** broke nearly every single-season passing record at Middle Tennessee while setting a new C-USA freshman passing mark. He threw for 4,005 yards and 30 touchdowns to go with a school-record eight 300-yard passing games. [MTSU](http://mtsu.com)



Brent Stockstill



Brent Stockstill, Christian Collis and Chandler Brewer



Kelci Cheney



Megan Chocallo



Emily Jorgenson

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I owe a great deal of the credit for the successful run I have had as president of MTSU to the steady hand and world-class



John Cothorn

job performance of John Cothorn, who retired in December 2015. Anyone who knows anything about higher education governance and fiscal responsibility knows that John represents the gold standard in those fields. I am forever indebted to him for the help and guidance he has provided both me and the University during his tenure here at MTSU.

John served as MTSU's senior vice president from 2005 until 2015. In that role, John was responsible for the management of the University's budget and financial planning; the Office of Business and Finance; Campus Planning; Facilities Services; Human Resource Services; University Police; and the Administrative and Business Services Department, which includes the MTSU Post Office, Phillips Bookstore, Vending, Procurement and Logistic Services, Contract Office, Distribution Services, and Receiving and Moving Services. He had overall



MTSU President Dr. Sidney A. McPhee congratulates John Cothorn.

responsibility for certain administrative offices, including Event Coordination; Production Services; Parking and Transportation

Service; Murphy Center Complex; Tennessee Livestock Center; and the Tennessee Miller Coliseum.



Alan Thomas

Especially during the past few years, which have been highlighted by reduced budgets and changing funding formulas, John has been a major asset to MTSU. I want to take this opportunity to publicly thank him for his service to MTSU and to wish him good luck in his future endeavors. We will most certainly miss him.

I have appointed Alan R. Thomas to the position of interim vice president of the Division of Business and Finance. Alan served previously as associate vice president for business and finance.

During his more than 20 years at MTSU, Alan has led or assisted with several major initiatives and improvements at the University. He was a leader in converting our accounting system to Ellucian's Banner platform and assisted in the launch of Banner Human Resources, Banner Advancement, and Banner Student. He helped restructure accounting for the MTSU Foundation through the implementation of the Fundriver Endowment Management Software and greatly improved our grant and contract accounting, billing, and monitoring. He has also ensured proper accounting of our capital projects, helping these efforts stay on schedule and budget. Before joining MTSU, Alan worked at the Tennessee Division of State Audit and for the Tennessee Board of Regents. [MTSU](http://www.mtsu.com)



Concert Prep

MTSU electronic media communication students provided extensive technical support—and eye-catching entertainment for fans—at the first large music concert inside Murphy Center since 2013. A dozen students from instructor Mike Forbes's video technology class added to their professional expertise as they set up a massive, 30-foot-wide LED video wall in Hale Arena for use during the free Homecoming 2015 concert featuring the Swedish duo Iona Pop, singers of the hit song "I Love It." VER Nashville, a leading national provider of video wall installations for the concert industry, loaned MTSU the large video wall components for the stated purpose of training a workforce ready for them to hire.

ADMISSIONS AND STUDENT RECRUITMENT

Several bold admissions initiatives have been key to our recent efforts to both sustain our ongoing operations and fuel our plans for growth, all the



President Dr. Sidney A. McPhee speaks with prospective students on the expanded True Blue Tour.

while maintaining strong support of the Governor's Drive to 55 push as well. Among these initiatives:

- We have firmly reinforced our standing as the No. 1 choice of Tennessee's transfer students. In the past few years, MTSU has forged numerous memorandums of agreement (MOUs) with community colleges statewide that provide direct pathways for students to seamlessly transfer to our four-year institution. Partners include Cleveland State, Southwest Tennessee, Walters State, Nashville State, Chattanooga State, Dyersburg State, Motlow State, Northeast State, Jackson State, Columbia State, and Roane State community colleges. Our great success in this area more than made up for any enrollment losses we experienced due to potential first-time freshmen engaging the Tennessee Promise. In fact, MTSU's transfer population was larger in 2015 than its incoming freshman class! We expect that positive trend to continue for years to come!
- We renewed and expanded our efforts in Dual Enrollment, which allows high school students to take college courses while they are still enrolled in

a secondary school—and earn credit from both institutions. MTSU already has dual enrollment partnerships with several schools in Rutherford, Williamson, and other Tennessee counties. Our partnership with nearby Blackman High School's new Collegiate Academy, for instance, allows eligible Blackman juniors and seniors to take up to six hours of MTSU courses at no cost from their high school setting. MTSU

and Williamson County Schools, a district consistently ranking among the best school districts in Tennessee and which has outpaced national rankings on a number of measures, signed a special partnership agreement in November 2015 that encourages the University and district to create additional academic enrichment opportunities tailored to the county's high schools.

- We successfully lobbied state policymakers to allow us to expand our Regional Scholars Program, which is focused on attracting higher-ability students from nearby states (within 250 miles of our Murfreesboro campus) by reducing MTSU's out-of-state tuition by 48 percent to students with an ACT composite of 25 and above. The tuition rate will equal our in-state tuition cost plus the cost of the state subsidy for students. This will create,

in effect, a reduction of nearly 50% in the cost of out-of-state tuition for this group of students. We are seeing promising early results as our out-of-state numbers are about 100 students higher than at this point last year. We have also dedicated a senior recruiter to lead our OOS recruitment efforts.

- We expanded our True Blue Tour, a student recruitment initiative, which this past year included taking academic deans and top administrators off campus to visit with prospective students in three out-of-state venues, as well as a first-ever stop in Williamson County. We hosted 765 students and their families, totaling 1,861 guests.
- In a related effort, at our Fall Preview Days, 421 prospective students and their families attended, totaling 981 guests.

As a result of these and many other new and proactive efforts, MTSU essentially held steady with regard to overall student enrollment in 2015. My thanks go to my wonderful academic and student affairs staffs for their incredible hard work to personally ensure MTSU's enrollment numbers remained steady. More good news is that early numbers for 2016 show an increase in applications at the Dec. 1 application deadline for scholarships. [MTSU](#)



October 20, 2015 True Blue Tour event.

OTHER NEWS AND NOTES FROM AROUND THE UNIVERSITY

Both MTSU recipients of Fulbright Awards this year were also finalists for the prestigious Marshall Fellowship. **Davis Thompson**, who is currently teaching in Slovakia, and **Tandra Martin**, who is teaching in South Africa, were both interviewed in Atlanta. They are the first two MTSU student finalists for this award.

The **Honors College** will be hosting its annual open house for high school and transfer students on Presidents' Day, Monday, February 15. Prior open houses have brought close to 500 people to campus.

Assistant Professor **Philip Seagraves** and his real estate students are renovating and selling multiple commercial properties in the downtown Murfreesboro area. A September 5 article in the *Daily News Journal* outlined the project.

Assistant Professor of Economics **Jason DeBacker's** work on tax evasion was featured in the August 21 edition of NPR's *Morning Edition* program, which runs nationally on NPR affiliate stations and on satellite radio.

A "hackathon"—**HackMT**—will bring software developers, visual designers,



programmers, and computer science students from local universities to MTSU to invent new web platforms, mobile apps, and electronic gadgets over 36 high-intensity, uninterrupted hours.

The event, hosted by the Computer Science Department in collaboration with Hack Tennessee and TN STEM Innovation Network, will take place in the new science building the weekend of January 29–31. MTSU boasts the largest computer science department in the state of Tennessee with 400-plus majors along with a top-notch master's degree program in Computer Science and a Computational Sciences Ph.D. program.

MTSU's recently created **mechatronics engineering program** now has 235 full-time majors in the middle of year three!



This is an incredible rate of growth and indicates both the interest and need for graduates. The first class of 12 lucky students will

graduate this spring and face a job market where they will receive multiple, lucrative, career opportunities in areas of advanced technology and automation. The program has received further success with a **National Science Foundation grant** for more than \$614,000 to provide scholarships in Mechatronics Engineering for women and minority applicants. Currently, MTSU's mechatronics engineering program is the only one in the world with the Level III designation through industry partner **Siemens AG**.

The **Aerospace Simulator** building construction is complete. This building features a sim bay to house our DA-40, Frasca 142, BE-1900, and CRJ simulators (all moved over the winter break). There is also a classroom and instructor briefing spaces in the building, located at the Murfreesboro Airport Campus.

The new **Unmanned Aircraft Systems (UAS) Operations** concentration has started with a bang, with 43 students enrolling in the Intro class in Fall 2015.



There are already 27 students who have declared UAS as their major, which has exceeded expectations for the first year.

The **Department of Philosophy's** letter of application to implement both B.A. and B.S. degrees in **Religious Studies** at MTSU has been approved by the Tennessee Board of Regents and has been forwarded to the Tennessee Higher Education Commission.

FIRE, our forensics institute, received a \$48,000 grant from the Tennessee Wars Commission to conduct historical, bio-archaeological, and forensic analyses of a skeletal series consisting of 11 to 13 sets of remains from soldiers of the

MIDDLE TENNESSEE STATE UNIVERSITY
Honors College
Open House
Presidents' Day · Monday, February 15, 2016
For high school and transfer students
Full schedule and registration at www.mtsu.edu/honors



Mexican-American War discovered in Monterrey, Mexico. The remains of those who gave Tennessee the name “The Volunteer State” are believed to be among these soldiers. Hugh Berryman, Shannon Hodge, and Derek Frisby are the lead researchers from MTSU, and a team of internationally recognized scientists will assist them. Goals of this project are to repatriate these soldiers to Tennessee and to publish the team’s findings in order to provide a deeper, richer understanding of the life and death of an 1846 American military soldier.

The Department of Art hosted the 18th International **Chawan Expo** (featuring ceramic tea bowls) with artists from around the world exhibiting from places as far-reaching as Israel, Africa, France, and Taiwan.



MTSU faculty and staff received 49 new **awards** during the first six months of FY16 for research, public service, and instructional activities, with a total award value of \$7,753,570. As of January 2016, the University had 183 active awards with a total portfolio value of \$24,374,119. **Hilary J. Miller**, Veterans and Military Family Center, received a \$90,672 grant from THEC that supports operation of the newly created center primarily by funding a graduate assistant

to assist veteran students with career placement and to establish a veteran alumni organization. This is Miller’s first award as a sole PI. **Richard Sluder**, Office of Student Success, was awarded \$225,000 from the EDUCAUSE iPASS program funded by the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation to support MTSU’s Quest for Student Success initiative. The award, Sluder’s first as MTSU’s vice provost for student success, will provide more targeted efforts to help students stay on track to earn their college degrees.

Dr. Timothy Odegard was recently named chair-holder of the Katherine Davis Murfree Chair of Excellence in Dyslexic Studies, a unit within the College of Education at MTSU. Odegard’s research focuses on memory and language, incorporating experimental methods and neuro-imaging to understand the development of these aspects of human cognition. His research strives to identify factors that predict the response of individuals with dyslexia and related specific reading disabilities to intensive multisensory reading instruction and to help inform instruction provided to these individuals. Odegard regularly speaks across the nation on topics related to dyslexia and specific reading disability.



Dr. Tim Odegard

The Produce for Better Health Foundation, a Delaware-based nonprofit organization, has given MTSU’s **Nutrition and Food Science Program** a grant of nearly \$1,500 to help MTSU students and alumnae enlighten the public about how to choose the best fruits and vegetables economically, how to read labels, how to eat produce in season, and how to prepare it properly. The funding will pay for a training manual, teaching materials, and coupons that will reduce the cost of produce for participants. In partnership with the Kroger supermarket at 2050 Lascassas Pike in Murfreesboro, training will begin in early January for four seniors and two alumnae who are now interns with National HealthCare Corporation.

The **James E. Walker Library** sees the equivalent of the entire student body every three or four days, with an additional 1.1 million uses of the website. Last year alone, the library’s instruction program taught 326 classes to better prepare students for college-level research and use of information. The library continues to make MTSU scholarship more visible through its **Digital Initiatives**. In the year since the launch of JEWLScholar, the library’s institutional repository, more than 4,300 articles and reports—including all MTSU dissertations—have been collected. The Library has continued to expand its access to collections with the addition of more than 2.5 million streaming audio tracks and 3,000 streaming videos. Walker Library also just opened a listening room for its 3,500 vinyl albums. **MTSU**

Taking the Lead

Associate professor of journalism Dr. Tricia Farwell is presently serving as the president of MTSU’s Faculty Senate as that organization celebrates its 50th anniversary in 2016. A series of activities and events are scheduled this year to draw greater attention to the anniversary and the central role the Faculty Senate holds in University matters. Farwell is now the primary spokesperson for the entire MTSU faculty in governance issues. It’s not the only high-profile role Farwell has recently assumed. In July 2015, Gov. Bill Haslam appointed Farwell to a one-year term as faculty representative on the Tennessee Board of Regents.



Dr. Tricia Farwell

MidPoints

Recent awards, events, and notable accomplishments

Compiled from the January 2016 edition of *MTSU Magazine*.

Boots on the Ground

Middle Tennessee athletics recently honored one of the most recognized names in Blue Raider sports history—former head football coach James “Boots” Donnelly—with the placement of a full-sized statue on the front lawn of the Kennon Sports Hall of Fame building.



James “Boots” Donnelly

Ed Bunio, a longtime MTSU assistant under Donnelly, spearheaded an effort

to raise funds for the 6-foot-6 bronze statue. A granite wall behind the statue includes the names of every player, assistant coach, trainer, manager, and secretary who worked in the program during Donnelly’s tenure as coach (1979–98).

In his 20 years as head coach, Donnelly amassed an overall record of 140-87-1, ranking him as the eighth most successful head coach in NCAA Division I-AA history at the time.

New Model

The College of Mass Communication, now known as the College of Media and Entertainment, not only has a new name, but also an expanded mission as it prepares a new generation of students for opportunities in an ever-changing media environment.

The College of Media and Entertainment builds on its strengths of teaching and research with an infusion of innovation and hands-on experiences which include: the consolidation of all of MTSU’s journalism education into a single department; the establishment of a rich, multi-media learning environment; the convergence of student media into a single app; the launch of Studio M, a bold new project from the Center for Innovation in Media focusing on millennials and mobile content; and the roll-out of J-Lab, a training and recruiting tool providing high school students with their first experiences in digital journalism.

Ken Paulson, dean of the college since July 2013, said the updated name better reflects the 24-hour media cycle and the growing demand for content that informs, engages, and entertains.

“It’s a clear and contemporary name that reflects the way media work today,” said Paulson. “The media world isn’t driven by mass communication anymore; it’s now all about targeted audiences, tailored content, and strategic audience-building... Though traditional media have been buffeted by digital technology, there’s more media being consumed around the world today than at any other time in history. The four channels on a



Ken Paulson

TV 50 years ago have been replaced by tens of thousands of content providers.”

Paulson said that the college, first established as a department in 1972 before being elevated to school and finally college status by 1989, has always focused on preparing students to perform every facet of communicating news and information within their specialties: journalism, electronic media, and the recording industry. This name change, he said, reflects the college’s goal of giving students skills across multiple media, which will ready them for their futures in addition to providing a solid, broad-based education.

“The rebooted College of Media and Entertainment will strive to give students the skills and insights they’ll need to engage, inform, and entertain audiences on multiple platforms,” he said. “That means learning to communicate effectively through words, audio, and video... It also means coming to grips with change. The most important traits we can instill in our students are a receptivity to change and a comfort level with technology. Colleges need to be as contemporary as possible, incorporating the latest technology, encouraging innovation, and fostering an entrepreneurial spirit.”

The fifth largest communication program in the nation, the MTSU College of Media and Entertainment offers degree concentrations in 14 major areas—ranging from the recording industry to journalism to filmmaking and animation—and is accredited by the Association for Education in Journalism and Mass Communication.

A Proud Nobel Past

A long-awaited and much-anticipated bronze bust of the late MTSU alumnus James M. Buchanan was unveiled by his youngest sister and a nationally acclaimed sculptor during a special ceremony in September 2015 in the James E. Walker Library. The 75-pound bust by Tracy H. Sugg of Wartrace, called “Dr. James Buchanan, A Man of Vision,” serves as a lasting tribute to Buchanan ('40), an American economist who was the recipient of the 1986 Nobel Memorial Prize in Economic Sciences and who died January 9, 2013. A stridently independent thinker, Buchanan earned the Nobel Prize for his development of Public Choice theory, which brings the tools of economic analysis to the study of public decision-making. The extremely competitive Buchanan scholarships, the highest financial aid award an entering MTSU freshman can receive, are named for Buchanan, whose estate gave MTSU \$2.5 million in May 2013 following his death.



Sculptor Tracy Sugg, left, and Liz Bradley, right.

The Honors College commissioned Sugg to create the bust. Elizabeth “Liz” Buchanan Bradley of Pearland, Texas, joined Sugg for the unveiling of the bust that rests on a black walnut pedestal made by Highland Rim Woodcrafts, which is owned by MTSU alumnus Kevin Kelly ('89) and his wife Melody of Tullahoma. The bust will remain on permanent display in Walker Library’s Buchanan Family Reading Room.

The Wright Stuff

Alumna Pam Wright ('73) jumpstarted the college careers of 11 MTSU students when she announced a \$100,000 donation to the College of Behavioral and Health Sciences in October 2015.



Pam Wright, center, presenting a check to the College of Behavioral and Health Sciences dean, Terry Whiteside, left.

The money will fund the Wright Travel Leadership Scholarship Program, an endeavor designed to motivate students through strategic coaching, formal mentoring opportunities, and pathways to scholarship money upon completion of specific criteria.

Recipients will also participate in personal development sessions that will include leadership, networking, and honing interpersonal skills. Wright, widely considered the most successful businesswoman in Nashville, owns Tennessee’s largest travel agency.

Home Sweet Home

MTSU President Sidney A. McPhee recently had the opportunity to return to his native country where he met with Perry G. Christie, prime minister of the Bahamas.

Christie visited with McPhee and MTSU men’s basketball coach Kermit Davis during the Blue Raider basketball squad’s summer 2015 visit to the Bahamas to play in three preseason exhibition games at the Commonwealth’s national gymnasium. McPhee also conferred with several of the country’s other top ministers during the seven-day trip.

“It was an honor to meet the prime minister and share with him the accomplishments of MTSU’s faculty, students, and student-athletes,” McPhee said.

Motown Icon

MTSU welcomed—and honored—one of the most prolific and influential people in American music in October when Motown hit-maker Lamont Dozier visited campus for a celebration of his work. During the visit, Dozier was named a Fellow of the Center for Popular Music, becoming only the second person to be so honored by the University’s special Tennessee Board of Regents Center of Excellence, which is devoted to the study and scholarship of popular music in America. Songwriter and performer Barry Gibb was the inaugural Fellow.



Dozier is the middle third of the Holland-Dozier-Holland team, who created the music of an era with songs like the Four Tops’ “Can’t Help Myself (Sugar Pie Honey Bunch),” the Supremes’ “Stop! In the Name of Love,” Martha and the Vandellas’ “Nowhere to Run,” Marvin Gaye’s “Can I Get a Witness” and 50 more No. 1 hits.

Dozier continues to be a successful solo artist and producer.

A Perfect Match

MTSU and Williamson County Schools signed a partnership agreement in November 2015 that will encourage the University and district to create additional academic enrichment opportunities tailored to the county’s high schools. The agreement is the first of its kind between the University and an entire district.

“We want Williamson County students and parents to take a closer look at all MTSU has to offer,” said MTSU President Sidney A. McPhee at the time of the announcement. “There are many great opportunities on our campus that we would like for this county’s students, educators and parents to explore.”

Williamson County Schools Superintendent Mike Looney expressed special interest in establishing ties between his district’s

continued on page 30 ➤

MTSU Arts

ART • DANCE • MUSIC • THEATRE

MTSU Arts ended the fall semester with its inaugural *Joy's of the Season* holiday program, featuring performances by faculty and students from the Department of Art, School of Music, and Department of Theatre and Dance. The MTSU community, along with families in middle Tennessee, enjoyed singing along to some of their favorite songs and celebrating the start of the holidays with us. We look forward to *Joy's of the Season* becoming an annual production each season. MTSU Arts will feature a variety of great shows, exhibits, and performances from our performing and fine arts departments during the spring semester.

- January 22–February 10: The Todd Art Gallery presents *12 x 12 National Exhibition of Small Scale Works of Arts*. Opening reception, January 21, 5:00–7:00 p.m.
- March 18, 7:00 p.m., and March 20, 3 p.m.: The School of Music presents MTSU Opera: *The Tender Land* by Aaron Copland in Wright Music Building's Hinton Music Hall.

- March 31–April 2, 7:30 p.m.: The MTSU Dance program presents the spring dance concert *Compositions* in Tucker Theatre.
- April 20–23, 7:30 p.m., and April 24, 2:00 p.m.: MTSU Theatre presents *West Side Story* in Boutwell Dramatic Arts Building's Tucker Theatre, directed by Kristi Shamburger. MTSU Arts will host its Spring Patron's Reception celebrating the season and start of this beloved production on Thursday, April 21 (location and time to be shared at a later date).

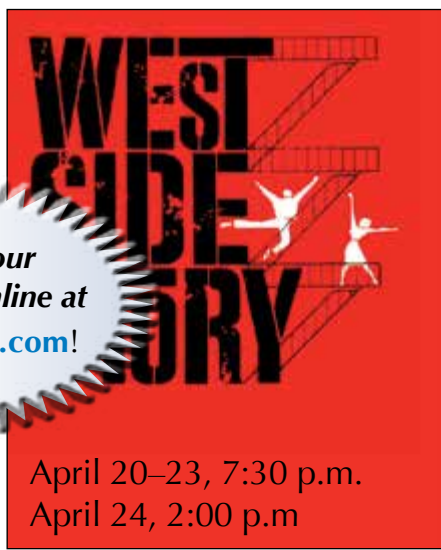
For a full list of upcoming MTSU Arts shows, exhibits, and performances, visit the MTSU Arts calendar at www.mtsuarts.com.

The MTSU community can further support the College of Liberal Arts performing and fine arts departments by joining the MTSU Arts Patron Society, which offers various opportunities to enjoy special events, exhibits and performances. To find out more, visit www.mtsuarts.com and click on the Patron Society tab at left. [MTSU](http://www.mtsu.edu)



Purchase your tickets today online at www.mtsuarts.com!

March 18, 7:00 p.m.
March 20, 3 p.m.



April 20–23, 7:30 p.m.
April 24, 2:00 p.m.

A Perfect Match continued from page 29

students and the University's Honors College, which McPhee said "fosters the academic excellence and nurturing environment of a small, select, private, liberal arts college within the setting of a major university."



President Sidney A. McPhee and Charles Farmer, Williamson County assistant superintendent of secondary schools.

The agreement also encourages the development of additional dual enrollment courses under the auspices of MTSU, with a particular emphasis on the University's signature programs, such as unmanned aerial systems aerospace and mechatronics engineering. Dual enrollment allows high school students to take college courses while they are still enrolled in a secondary school and earn credit from both institutions. MTSU already has dual enrollment partnerships with several schools in other Tennessee counties, including Rutherford County.

Top of the Heap

For the second year in a row, the Department of Recording Industry was placed on an international list of acclaimed music industry schools touted by *The Hollywood Reporter* that includes Juilliard, Berklee, the Seoul Institute for the Arts, and the Conservatoire de Paris. The department—plus its music business program—was recently ranked No. 17 on the magazine's "Top 25 Music Schools 2015." The publication's editors, who compiled the list, focus on academia's attempt to balance "art vs. commerce" by teaching students who want to use their creativity to make a living. [MTSU](http://www.mtsu.edu)

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