



BOARD OF GOVERNORS

R E P O R T

J U N E 1 1 , 2 0 2 6

DR. DEAN VAN GALEN

PRESIDENT

SPRING COMMENCEMENT

On May 9, we celebrated the achievements of 587 graduates during two commencement ceremonies, awarding associate, bachelor's, and master's degrees. Notably, 39 students earned master's degrees, the highest number in the university's history. The morning ceremony also recognized 15 Golden Graduates from the Class of 1976 and earlier, whose participation highlighted the enduring legacy and proud tradition of our institution. We were especially honored to welcome Dr. Amber Phipps ('04), a distinguished healthcare executive and major in the U.S. Army Reserve, who delivered an inspiring commencement address.



LOOKING BACK: HIGHLIGHTS FROM THE 2025-2026 ACADEMIC YEAR

It was a year of progress and impact at Missouri Southern—here are a few examples:

- Surpassing the \$42.7 million goal of the five-year Lions Forward campaign in January 2026.
- Achieving a modest increase in year-over-year headcount enrollment for the fall semester and marked improvement in freshman persistence rate (fall to spring).
- Fully embracing the university's new statewide mission by implementing a comprehensive marketing/awareness campaign and bolstering key elements of the mission.
- Completing the \$3.2 million phase one renovation of Leggett & Platt Athletic Center.
- Developing a five-year major facilities plan/roadmap that will support strategic and informed facilities decisions over the next five years.
- Success of our Lion student athletes in the classroom, community and in competition—including the extraordinary competitive accomplishments of spring sports.

This progress is the result of the collective work of our faculty, staff, students, and the support of Missouri Southern's volunteer boards, alumni, and community.

FISCAL YEAR 2027 HIGHER EDUCATION BUDGET AWAITS GOVERNOR'S ACTION

As part of the Fiscal Year 2027 state budget proposed in January, Gov. Mike Kehoe recommended flat funding for Missouri public higher education institutions at Fiscal Year 2026 levels. While the Missouri House proposed redistributing funding based solely on student full-time equivalent enrollment, the Missouri Senate supported the governor's recommendation, which now awaits his signature. The university developed its FY27 budget assuming flat state funding. The proposed budget also includes \$1.1 million to continue the Science to Jobs program, with half the funding supporting activities at Missouri Southern.

GRAND OPENING OF ROY BLUNT HEALTH SCIENCE INNOVATION CENTER PLANNED FOR AUGUST 13

Excitement is building as the university prepares to open the Roy Blunt Health Science Innovation Center. To honor Spring and Summer 2026 graduates — who will not have the opportunity to take classes or enjoy coffee in the building as students — the university offered a special tour of the facility on May 7. The Roy Blunt Health Science Innovation Center will officially open at 10 a.m. Aug. 13.



ADVANCING GLOBAL EDUCATION

This summer, four faculty-led study abroad programs involving 50 students traveled to Ghana, Italy, Sweden and Belize, with coursework in art, anatomy, biology, history and literature. Five additional students are participating in summer programs at partner universities in South Korea and the Czech Republic.



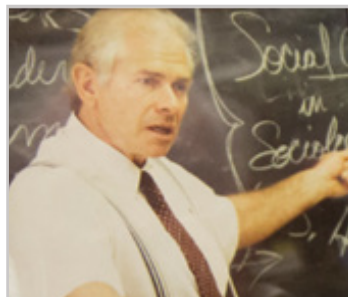
The university also will host its inaugural International Summer School in July, welcoming students from partner institutions for a cultural immersion program focused on Route 66, the World Cup and America 250.

Looking ahead, the Fall 2026 themed semester will focus on Vietnam, featuring 10 courses with 129 enrolled students. A study abroad program to Vietnam is planned for January 2027, with community participation available through Southern Safari. Future themed semester locations include Portugal in 2027, Argentina in 2028 and Singapore in 2029.

THE IMPACT OF GREAT PEOPLE

Recent university events, including the participation of the Golden Graduates in commencement, the annual retiree luncheon and an alumni event in northwest Arkansas, served as reminders of the lasting impact outstanding MSSU employees have had on students and graduates over the years. Southern is a strong university because of its people: outstanding staff, faculty, alumni, friends and volunteer board members who believe in the university's educational mission.

Special thanks also to Michelle Wood for serving the past 11 months as interim vice president for University Advancement and executive director of the Missouri Southern Foundation. During a year of significant change in University Advancement, she provided not only stability, but also keen insight, professionalism and growth for those around her.



EXPLORE BOLDLY. CARE DEEPLY. IMPACT GLOBALLY.

DR. LISA TOMS

PROVOST / VICE PRESIDENT OF ACADEMIC AFFAIRS

COLLEGE OF ARTS AND SCIENCES

The **America 250 concert** featured performances by the MSSU Concert Band, MSSU Orchestra and MSSU Choirs before an audience of approximately 800. Students, faculty and community members participated. Joplin Mayor Kennan Cortez presented President Van Galen with a city resolution.



The **World Music and Cuisine Festival** was held April 18. Attendance reached 650, supported by 130 volunteers, cooks and performers. The event raised \$5,900 for the International Club. Twenty-five countries were represented at 38 tables featuring approximately 80 food and beverage offerings. Several student organizations, local businesses and community groups participated.



COLLEGE OF BUSINESS, COMMUNICATION & TECHNOLOGY

Throughout February, March and April, the **Plaster School of Business** hosted the Volunteer Income Tax Assistance program. In collaboration with CPA volunteers, Tax II students provided tax preparation services to community members each Saturday. This year, the MSSU VITA site recorded a 28% increase over last year, with 301 accepted returns and \$327,096 in refunds. The IRS estimates the program generated approximately \$3.2 million in economic impact for the Joplin community.



In April, the **Missouri Small Business Development Center** and the **Plaster School of Business** hosted the annual Pitch Palooza event. The two-day business pitch competition celebrated innovation, creativity and entrepreneurship in high school, college, startup and scalability categories. Local entrepreneurs served as judges, and nearly \$10,000 in sponsor donations provided funding for category winners.



The **Department of Communication** held its annual media competition and awards ceremony. Featured speakers were Doug Heady, meteorologist and MSSU alumnus, and Shea Schrader, Emmy Award-winning investigative reporter and MSSU alumna. Ten area schools participated, with 220 students registered for the event.

COLLEGE OF HEALTH, LIFE SCIENCES & EDUCATION

The **Kinesiology Department** celebrated the launch of its new Applied Suspension Training Research (ASTR) Lab and Dynamic Athletic Research Institute (DARI) Lab. Founded by Dr. Rawsam Alasmar, the ASTR Lab focuses on suspension-based training using the PENDL device to improve physical performance and reduce injury risk. MSSU became the only university in the world with four PENDL devices, creating unique opportunities for research, teaching, and athletic training.



Two student-led anatomical research projects were selected as finalists for the **American Association for Anatomy Undergraduate Student Poster Presentation Award** after advancing through a highly competitive national review process. In addition, anatomical research completed in the cadaver laboratory was accepted for publication in Discover Medicine.

The **Environmental and Health Club** also concluded the semester with a field trip to the Ozark Underground Lab in Protem, Missouri, where students explored Tumbling Creek Cave and learned about environmental challenges from professionals in the field.



The college also reports strong board performance across several programs. In **Radiology**, 16 out of 16 students passed their board exams on the first attempt. In **Respiratory Therapy**, 10 students have tested so far, and all 10 have passed on their first try. In **Dental Hygiene**, 27 out of 27 students passed their clinical boards on the first attempt, and the program is currently awaiting results from the written examinations.



OTHER ACADEMIC AFFAIRS AREAS

In March, MSSU **University Police Department** implemented a formal field training program for newly hired officers, finalized an agreement with the Joplin Police Department to provide dispatch services at no cost to the university, and secured a donation of five public safety radios from the JASCO Board of Emergency Services valued at approximately \$37,500. The donation allows full integration into the countywide emergency communications system.



Students in the MSSU **Honors Program** continued to achieve success both on and off campus. Four students presented at the Great Plains Honors Council annual conference, two students placed in the MSSU Research Symposium, one student was named a Willcoxon Scholar, and two students participated in the national Model Constitution Convention in May. Additionally, one student was selected for the Sigma Tau Delta Cambridge Summer Program, and another was accepted into the Asian Studies Program in Osaka, Japan.



LINDA EIS

CHIEF FINANCIAL OFFICER

FISCAL YEAR 2027 BUDGET

The Fiscal Year 2027 budget has been presented and reviewed by the Board Budget Audit Committee. The Board of Governors will formally approve the budget at the board meeting. The budget reflects a positive cash balance for the third year in a row. The budget includes tuition rate increases, changes in enrolled credit hours, incorporates the flat base appropriation allocation as well as compensation changes, MOSERS retirement increase, and other expenditure costs or savings.

AUDIT FISCAL YEAR 2026

We are in the final month of Fiscal Year 2026 and audit preparation is moving along at a fast pace as we prepare for the annual audit. Forvis Mazars (our external audit firm) will be on site in July to begin the compliance fieldwork that primarily centers around student financial aid and federal grants. They will begin the walkthrough evaluations. The auditors will return to campus again for two weeks in August for additional fieldwork that focuses on the university's fiscal year financial transactions.

This year we have another new accounting standard to implement from the Governmental Accounting Standards Board (GASB). The new standard is GASB103, Financial Reporting Model Improvements. This standard will include improvements to key components of financial reporting.

FACILITY SERVICES

Roy Blunt Health Science Innovation Center

This month we continue to work on signage, artwork, furniture, coffee shop equipment, and finishing work by subcontractors.



Leggett & Platt

Phase 1 of this project is complete. We were excited to return to this space and celebrate commencement of our amazing students. We look forward to our athletic teams utilizing the new track and basketball court and our Southern supporters will enjoy the beautiful new bleachers.



Phase 2 of the project is moving forward due to a generous philanthropic gift for this facility. Bids have been received for painting and restroom upgrades. We are finalizing the details for the new videoboard system.

Summer Projects

As part of the five-year facility roadmap to reduce our active footprint and increase energy efficiency, the following projects will take place this summer.

- Kuhn Hall/Kuhn Annex: Departments located in these buildings will move to Webster Hall.
- Mansion Annex: University Relations and Marketing will move to the first floor of Hearnes Hall, which will be vacated as Admissions moves to the new Welcome Center.
- Ummel Hall: Facilities and faculty located in Ummel will transition to Plaster with a few faculty moving to the Roy Blunt Health Science Innovation Center.
- Young Gym Pool has been drained, and the space has been secured.

Additional projects over the summer include MOSO Caps relocating to the Mills Anderson Justice Center, Mayes Student Life Center renovation, Taylor Performing Art Center restrooms renovation, repaving of parking lots/streets and other infrastructure projects.

Occupancy of the Roy Blunt Health Science Innovation Center will occur over the summer with significant coordination from Director of Facility Services Jeff Boman, Chief Information Officer Jimmie Collins, and the faculty and staff that will work in the facility.

This summer, we will see enormous efforts from numerous faculty and staff to ensure that all of these projects are completed and ready to welcome students to our campus for the Fall 2026 semester.

HUMAN RESOURCES

On May 5, we celebrated our current retirees: Cindy Webb, Michelle Wood, Glenna Routledge, and John Harrison (who was unable to attend). Each supervisor shared a tribute that spoke to the impact and legacy each one leaves behind. They were recognized for their years of service to Missouri Southern and their contributions to countless students. Our people make a difference every single day.



Cindy Webb



Michelle Wood



Glenna Routledge

FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

Presentation of the financial statements for the period ending May 31, 2026.

EXPLORE BOLDLY. CARE DEEPLY. IMPACT GLOBALLY.

MICHELLE WOOD

INTERIM VICE PRESIDENT FOR UNIVERSITY ADVANCEMENT

LIONS FORWARD CAMPAIGN – FUNDRAISING UPDATES

As of April 30, the Lions Forward fundraising campaign has raised \$43,524,036. This represents 101.48% of the campaign’s overall goal, with one year remaining in the timeline. FY26 third-quarter fundraising income increased 4.43% over FY25 third quarter totals — rising from \$5,060,892 in FY25 to \$5,285,322 in FY26. This growth reflects continued donor investment and momentum in philanthropic support from the Missouri Southern community.

Enhancing Student Experience

- Goal: \$15,000,000
- Raised: \$22,699,348
- 150% of Goal

Building the Campus of the Future

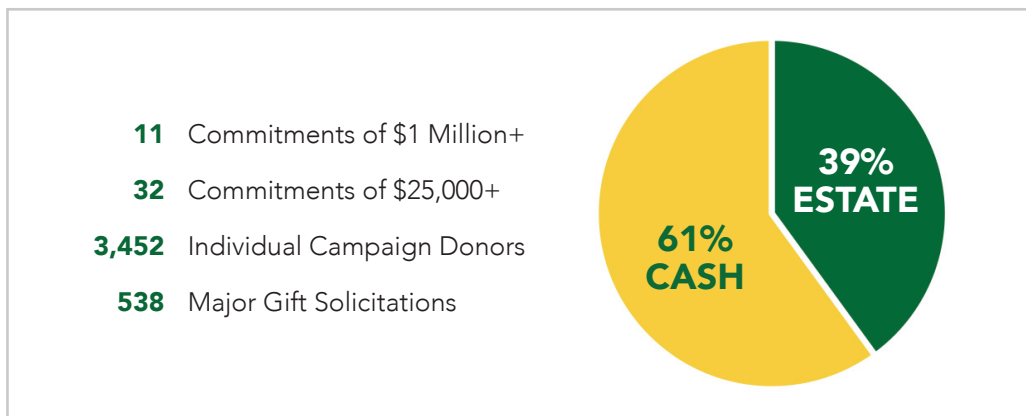
- Goal: \$8,500,000
- Raised: \$7,754,682
- 91% of Goal

Fostering Academic Excellence

- Goal: \$8,000,000
- Raised: \$9,883,113
- 114% of Goal

Total Dollars Raised

- Goal: \$42,700,000
- Raised: \$43,524,036
- 101.48% of Total Campaign Goal



ALUMNI AND DONOR RELATIONS

Scholarship Dinner | March 10

The annual Scholarship Dinner was a time of connection and celebration, welcoming more than 300 student scholarship recipients and donors. Donors were seated with scholarship recipients, creating an opportunity for personal conversation. A student panel shared how scholarship support has impacted their experience and helped make their educational goals possible.



Willcoxon Innovation in Health Sciences Summit | March 27

The 2026 event saw remarkable growth and participation.

Overall, the 2026 Summit demonstrated meaningful growth in scale, participation, and community impact.

- Total registrations increased to 535, up from 380 last year.
- 417 registrants attended, representing a 78% attendance rate.
- Average session attendance was 265.
- 64 individual professionals participated in Continuing Education credit, resulting in 189 session forms submitted for CE credits.



Humphreys Scholarship Banquet | April 9

A separate banquet was held to celebrate the recipients of the Debra and David Humphreys Excellence Award and recognize the continued impact of the Humphreys' generosity. This year's program honored 115 student award recipients, including 84 program graduates. Of those graduates, 92% live within 50 miles of Joplin. To date, the Humphreys have contributed \$864,993 in support of this important scholarship program.

Lantern Society | April 17

The Lantern Society was a wonderful evening held at the OCH/Nexus Event Center in Webb City, with 133 guests. The event provided an opportunity to recognize outstanding philanthropy and celebrate those whose generosity strengthens Missouri Southern and the broader community.

Amanda Kimble, harpist, provided the evening's entertainment. Dot Willcoxon was honored as the individual Spirit of Philanthropy recipient, and Arvest Bank, represented by Richard Winesburg, received the business Spirit of Philanthropy Award.



Golden Grads | May 9

The Golden Grads breakfast welcomed 15 alumni who graduated in 1976 or prior.

Following breakfast, the group led the processional for commencement, creating a special moment of recognition during the ceremony. Several attendees shared how meaningful the experience was, noting that they felt celebrated and honored in a way they had not experienced in many years. Their participation served as a meaningful reminder of the lasting connection alumni maintain with Missouri Southern.

Ralph L. Gray Alumni Center

The Ralph L. Gray Alumni Center underwent a substantial exterior renovation this spring, including a complete re-stuccoing of the building. All exterior doors were also stripped, repainted, or stained, giving the mansion a refreshed and polished appearance.

DR. SHELLIE HEWITT

ASSOCIATE VICE PRESIDENT OF ADMISSIONS AND ENROLLMENT

SUMMER RECRUITMENT INITIATIVES AND ON-CAMPUS ENGAGEMENT

Throughout the summer months, MSSU continues to maintain an active recruitment presence through a variety of on-campus engagement opportunities designed to build early connections with prospective students and their families. Several examples include Compass Academy, Joplin Middle School and Science to Jobs. These initiatives support enrollment growth, strengthen community partnerships, and increase awareness of MSSU academic programs and student support services.

Key summer recruitment initiatives include:

- Hosting two Lion Pride Visit Days and individualized campus tours for students and families considering MSSU.
- Collaborating with Student Success for summer orientation and enrollment events to assist admitted students with registration, financial aid, housing, and transition planning.
- Partnering with regional school districts, community organizations, and youth programs to bring middle school and high school students to campus for immersive experiences.
- Collaborating across divisions including Admissions, Academic Affairs, Student Affairs, and University Relations to ensure visitors experience a welcoming and student-centered campus environment.
- Utilizing summer programming to strengthen the university's visibility in key recruitment markets while building long-term enrollment pipelines beginning well before students reach their senior year of high school.
- These initiatives reflect MSSU's continued commitment to proactive recruitment, student engagement, and relationship-building with future Lions and their families.



IMPORTANCE OF OFF-CAMPUS RECRUITMENT EVENTS AND BRAND AWARENESS

Off-campus recruitment and community engagement events remain an essential component of MSSU's enrollment and outreach strategy. These events provide valuable opportunities to extend the university's presence beyond campus boundaries and directly engage prospective students, families, school counselors, educators, and community partners in the regions MSSU serves. Several opportunities include Will's Place Block Party in Joplin, Acellus Homeschool Event in Kansas City, Bentonville Bikefest, and Ignite College Fair in Bentonville, AR.



Participation in college fairs, community festivals, career expos, school visits, and industry-related events allows MSSU to:

- Increase visibility and strengthen overall brand awareness in key recruitment markets.
- Showcase academic programs, student support services, scholarships, athletics, and campus opportunities directly to prospective students and influencers.
- Build meaningful relationships with school districts, community organizations, employers, and educational partners.
- Position MSSU as an accessible, student-focused institution committed to workforce development and regional impact.
- Engage students earlier in the college search process, particularly middle school and underclassmen populations who are beginning to form postsecondary aspirations.
- Reach students who may not otherwise visit campus or have prior familiarity with MSSU.
- Reinforce the university's reputation through consistent representation, storytelling, and community involvement.

Off-campus engagement is particularly important in today's increasingly competitive enrollment environment, where institutions must actively build awareness and relationships long before students begin submitting college applications. These efforts help create familiarity and trust with prospective students and families while ensuring MSSU remains visible and relevant across the communities it serves.

By maintaining a strong presence at external events throughout the year, MSSU continues to strengthen recruitment pipelines, expand regional influence, and support long-term enrollment growth objectives.

STRATEGIC ENROLLMENT COUNCIL UPDATE

Goal 1: Robust Enrollment

The Strategic Enrollment Council continues to make significant progress toward Goal 1 of the Strategic Enrollment Plan, which focuses on strengthening overall enrollment through expanded recruitment strategies, enhanced student experiences, and the development of stronger enrollment pipelines across multiple student populations. Current efforts center on improving recruitment outreach, enhancing the student experience, and building sustainable enrollment growth for the future.



Key accomplishments and ongoing initiatives include:

- Enhancements to campus visits and Lion Pride Visit Days to create a more personalized and immersive experience for prospective students and families.
- Development of new recruitment strategies targeting dual credit students, transfer students, rural communities, private schools, TRIO programs, and students outside MSSU's primary service region.
- Collaboration among Admissions, University Relations and Marketing, Academic Affairs, and Student Success to align recruitment efforts with program capacity and institutional priorities.

- Expansion of targeted marketing and communication campaigns using CRM data and enrollment analytics to better reach prospective students.
- Continued development of scholarship opportunities and recruitment tools designed to increase conversion of dual credit students into degree-seeking freshmen.
- Increased campus-wide collaboration supporting the philosophy that recruitment and retention are shared institutional responsibilities.
- Ongoing work to reimagine recruitment events and student engagement opportunities, including exploratory programming for undecided students and enhanced transfer student experiences.
- Strong progress in graduate enrollment initiatives, including revised marketing materials, program-specific outreach, and improved graduate recruitment planning.

These coordinated efforts continue to support enrollment growth, strengthen MSSU's market presence, and improve the overall experience for prospective and current students.

ROB MALLORY

DIRECTOR OF ATHLETICS

LIONS EXCEL IN THE CLASSROOM

The Spring 2026 semester featured another strong academic performance for MSSU student-athletes, as they collectively earned a 3.29 GPA, up from 3.199 last spring. That makes the current cumulative Athletic Department GPA a 3.365, marking the 16th consecutive semester the department GPA has been above a 3.0 and sets a new standard for the highest cumulative department GPA on record.

164 student-athletes earned a 3.5 GPA (46%) or better for the spring, while 67 finished with a perfect 4.0 GPA (19%).

Leading the way in the classroom for the Spring 2026 term were softball (3.87), women's golf (3.636), volleyball (3.558), women's track and field (3.576), and women's soccer (3.539).

A BANNER SPRING FOR MSSU ATHLETICS

The spring sports season was one of the most successful in the history of Missouri Southern athletics, with five programs making appearances in the NCAA Division II postseason.

The **women's golf** team qualified for the NCAA Division II Central Region tournament in St. Joseph, Missouri, after finishing the regular season ranked 15th in the region. This marked the second time overall and second consecutive year the team has qualified for the NCAA postseason.



The **baseball** team also qualified for the NCAA Central Region tournament as the #7 seed and completed their season with a 34-19 overall record. The Lions finished in a tie for second place in the MIAA regular season standings. The NCAA postseason appearance was the 11th all-time for the program and third in the past four years.



Both the **men's and women's track programs** finished third at the NCAA Division II Outdoor Track and Field Championship meet, held in Emporia, Kansas. This marked the best finish in program history for both teams, and the first time the women's program brought home a trophy for a Top-4 finish. Both programs also finished as the runners-up at the MIAA Championships.

25 student-athletes qualified for the national championship meet, the most ever for MSSU. Ten Lion student-athletes earned first-team All-American honors by virtue of finishing in the top eight of their events. **Cedric Pearson** (men's shot put), **Dailyynn VanDeren** (women's shot put), and **Adrienne Casey** (women's javelin) were crowned NCAA Division II National Champions in their respective events.



The **softball** team concluded a historic season in the NCAA Division II Softball World Series in Chattanooga, Tennessee, the program's first trip to the championship event since 1992. The Lions finished the year with a record of 54-10. The 54 wins set the program record for victories in a season. Along the way, MSSU won the MIAA regular season, MIAA tournament, NCAA Division II Central Region, and NCAA Division II Super-Region championships.



Kiki Pickens was named the MIAA Pitcher of the Year for the second consecutive season. **Emily Davis** earned MIAA Freshman of the Year honors. Pickens and **Bailey Dillon** were both named All-Americans by the National Fastpitch Coaches Association and Conference Commissioners Association.

Carsen Tinkler was named the MIAA "A-Game" Scholar and NCAA Division 2 Elite Scholar-Athlete, awards given to the student-athlete with the highest GPA at the MIAA Tournament and NCAA Championship final site, respectively. Carsen graduated with a 4.0 GPA in finance and marketing.

SERGIO REYES NAMED INAUGURAL HEAD WOMEN'S FLAG FOOTBALL COACH

Gaithersburg High School (Maryland) head coach Sergio Reyes was named the first-ever head women's flag football coach at MSSU. Prior to working at Gaithersburg High School, he led both the recreational flag football and basketball programs for 12 consecutive, successful years at the Montgomery County Recreation Department. In this position, he has had the opportunity to share his passion for basketball and football with young athletes.



Besides his athletic experience, Reyes brings over two decades of executive leadership in insurance and financial services, as well as the government sector. He has held senior leadership roles including regional director at Mutual of Omaha, director of business development at VIATEQ Corporation, president/CEO at Primitus Inc., founder of District Mutual, chief marketing officer at XCINEX, and financial services consultant at State Farm Insurance.

A chartered financial consultant, Reyes, graduated from Marymount University in 2003 with his Bachelor of Business Administration. He officially began his duties on April 20 and has already secured several verbal commitments for the 2026-27 academic year.

ROARY'S AWARD BANQUET HONORS MSSU STUDENT-ATHLETE ACCOMPLISHMENTS

On May 4, the MSSU Athletic Department held its annual awards banquet, now renamed the Roary's by the Student-Athlete Advisory Committee. The annual event honors and recognizes the academic and athletic accomplishments of MSSU student-athletes. The event also featured a special commencement ceremony for spring sport student-athletes and the induction of a new class of members in Chi Alpha Sigma, the national student-athlete honor society. Award winners for the event are listed below.



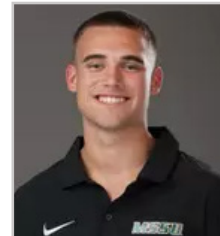
Harry Greninger Heart of a Lion Award

Female: **Carsen Tinkler**, Softball
Male: **Lincoln Renfro**, Football



Newcomer of the Year

Female: **Emily Davis**, Softball
Male: **Tillman Martin**, Football



Athlete of the Year

Female: **Dailynn VanDeren**, Indoor & Outdoor Track & Field
Male: **Cedric Pearson**, Indoor & Outdoor Track & Field



Career Achievement Award

Female: **Katie Gray**, Softball
Male: **Cedric Pearson**, Indoor & Outdoor Track & Field



SAAC Mentor of the Year
Carissa Cessna



Community Service Award

Team, **Softball**
342 hours of community service



Scholar Athlete Award
Carsen Tinkler, Softball



E.O. & Virginia Humphrey Award
Abby Hobbs