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▲ 2018 Freshman Class Photo, taken by Beth Wynn, MSU Photographer

DANCE MARATHON

BY DEVIN EDGAR

Mississippi State University's Dance Marathon (StateDM) is a student organization that holds an annual event in which proceeds support the Children's Miracle Network. StateDM gives each student involved the opportunity to personally impact the lives of children fighting cancer—specifically those at Le Bonheur Children's Hospital, located in Memphis, Tennessee.

Each year, a group of dynamic students spends the time leading up to the dance marathon holding unique fundraising activities, such as "Jumping in the Junction," "Rockin' at Ricks" and "Kones 4 Kids," with 100 percent of the proceeds donated to Le Bonheur.

The Dance Marathon team is continuously looking for creative ways to get more students involved and to increase registration numbers for the marathon. This year, as a way to generate buzz before Child Health Day, StateDM displayed a giant, inflatable baby on the Drill Field. With an original goal to get 170 students registered for the event, the team blew those numbers out of the water after the reveal, with 457 registered students. Additionally, the event won \$4,000 for having the most students register across all Dance Marathon programs and for receiving the highest number of donations.

StateDM also surpassed its \$80,000 goal by over \$10,000, to raise \$93,244.90 this year.

For Alex White, the 2017-2018 StateDM President, Dance Marathon allowed her a chance to have a "meaningful impact," despite being in a

seemingly helpless position. "Unfortunately, many families can't afford the treatment their child needs to live, and many hospitals don't have the resources to meet the needs of children in the community," she explained. "Individually, I can't do much to change these circumstances. However, being involved with Dance Marathon allowed me to help organize others to help those in need and ultimately have a larger impact than any of us could have had on our own."

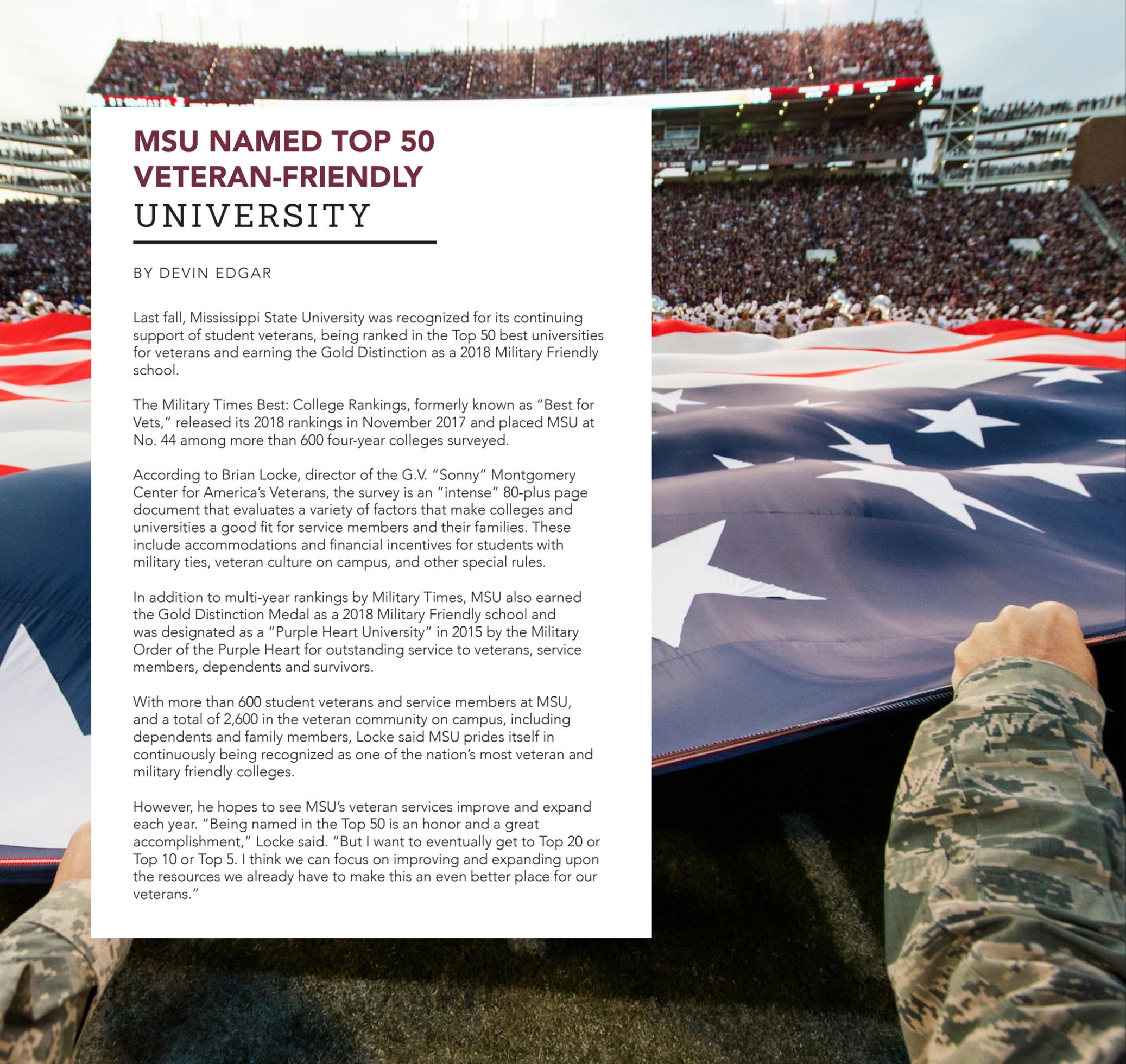
When looking back on her undergraduate experience, Alex said that being involved in StateDM was her favorite part of her MSU experience, and it allowed her to learn more about herself, her peers and the Starkville community in the process.

Although Alex is a 2018 graduate, she said she still wishes to encourage incoming freshmen to get involved with such a meaningful organization, simply because StateDM's group efforts could significantly impact the lives of children.

"I would encourage students to be involved in Dance Marathon because of the potential impact you can make," she said. "The children in the hospital and their families need support and a reason to smile. Devoting your whole night to standing in honor of them symbolizes your solidarity and gives them strength and hope."

The official 2019 StateDM date is February 9. Those interested in getting involved with the organization should visit statedm.weebly.com to register for the event.





MSU NAMED TOP 50 VETERAN-FRIENDLY UNIVERSITY

BY DEVIN EDGAR

Last fall, Mississippi State University was recognized for its continuing support of student veterans, being ranked in the Top 50 best universities for veterans and earning the Gold Distinction as a 2018 Military Friendly school.

The Military Times Best: College Rankings, formerly known as “Best for Vets,” released its 2018 rankings in November 2017 and placed MSU at No. 44 among more than 600 four-year colleges surveyed.

According to Brian Locke, director of the G.V. “Sonny” Montgomery Center for America’s Veterans, the survey is an “intense” 80-plus page document that evaluates a variety of factors that make colleges and universities a good fit for service members and their families. These include accommodations and financial incentives for students with military ties, veteran culture on campus, and other special rules.

In addition to multi-year rankings by Military Times, MSU also earned the Gold Distinction Medal as a 2018 Military Friendly school and was designated as a “Purple Heart University” in 2015 by the Military Order of the Purple Heart for outstanding service to veterans, service members, dependents and survivors.

With more than 600 student veterans and service members at MSU, and a total of 2,600 in the veteran community on campus, including dependents and family members, Locke said MSU prides itself in continuously being recognized as one of the nation’s most veteran and military friendly colleges.

However, he hopes to see MSU’s veteran services improve and expand each year. “Being named in the Top 50 is an honor and a great accomplishment,” Locke said. “But I want to eventually get to Top 20 or Top 10 or Top 5. I think we can focus on improving and expanding upon the resources we already have to make this an even better place for our veterans.”

LOCKE NAMED DIRECTOR of MSU’s veterans center

BY DEVIN EDGAR

For student veterans, college comes with a set of unique challenges that many other students do not face.

For example, retired Army Veteran, Lt. Col. Brian Locke said most student veterans are older than the average college student, others may not be receiving parental support, and some could have families of their own.

Locke, a Tennessee native, joined the Army right out of high school and spent a total of 23 years serving as an Army Military Police Officer. During that time, he earned a bachelor’s degree from Middle Tennessee State University as a Distinguished Military Graduate, received a master’s in Counseling and Development from Long Island University, and graduated from the FBI National Academy. His last assignment brought him to Mississippi State University, where he served as a professor of Military Science and commander of the Army ROTC Program.

This spring, Locke was officially named the new director of the G.V. “Sonny” Montgomery Center for America’s Veterans, after serving as the interim director since early 2017.

“When this opportunity came up, I knew it would be the best of both worlds,” Locke said. “I’m still getting to work with veterans and those actively serving in the military every day even though I have retired.”



Lt. Col. (Ret.) Brian Locke

As director of the center, Locke said his primary focus is to ensure that all military-connected students, and student veterans, receive the assistance and support they need to thrive in the higher education setting.

“My main focus will always be assisting these students and making sure their transition from the military to higher education, or college to the workforce, is as smooth as possible,” Locke said.

Additionally, he said, a large part of the job is just “getting the word out” and making sure these students know of the resources and services the veterans center has to offer. In the center at Nusz Hall, there are student support spaces, private computer labs and study spaces, a student lounge area and an outdoor patio space, which Locke said is what sets MSU apart from other “military friendly” colleges and universities.

“I think this center is a true testament to what these military veterans and students mean to the people at Mississippi State,” Locke said. “And it really gives them a place of their own during their time on campus.”

BULLDOG BASH CONTINUES TO DRAW LARGE CROWDS

BY DEVIN EDGAR

Mississippi State University's Bulldog Bash is a free event held each fall that features various activities throughout the weekend, including the Maroon Market and an outdoor concert the night before the first SEC home football game.

Previously held in Starkville's Historic Cotton District, Bulldog Bash saw increasing attendance, which prompted MSU's Student Association to change the event location last year. Again this year, Bulldog Bash took place in Downtown Starkville at the intersection of Jackson Street and Main Street, which accommodates larger crowds and provides a new atmosphere.

Previous headliners include Jason Mraz, Eli Young Band, X Ambassadors, Justin Moore, Eric Church, and most recently, the multi-platinum pop/rock band DNCE. The festival is not just one concert, but showcases a variety of local bands and performers leading up to the headline performance.

Bulldog Bash began as a kickoff party for the university's SEC football season opener in 1999, and has since remained a tradition that students look forward to every fall. In its first year, Bulldog Bash only drew a small crowd of 2,000, but with a dedicated group of students leading the event, numbers have continuously increased each year. Now, the concert draws in crowds of more than 35,000 visitors and is branded as "Mississippi's Largest, Free Outdoor Concert/Event."

The event draws in alumni, football fans, and others just looking to experience the outdoor concert, which is a much different crowd than the parents and students the university sees on a day-to-day basis. The end result is an event that gives MSU the opportunity to promote itself and student activities in a new light.

Andrew McDavid, assistant director of Bulldog Bash, said the student team prepares all summer for the event to continue to be a success.

"I hope that students, alumni, and visitors enjoy the event as much as we enjoy putting it on," he said. "I love working with this event because it truly brings together so many people from all areas of life. Students, alumni, family members, and friends all come out and enjoy a day of fun in Downtown Starkville, which is what it is all about."



STUDENT LEADERSHIP HIGHLIGHTS



Mayah Emerson

Mayah Emerson, senior Education Psychology major, is looking forward to teaching a leadership class in her upcoming semester as Student Association president.

Before she began her role as president, Emerson served the Student Association as director of Programming, where she had the opportunity to design a one-credit hour leadership class, taught by the SA president. Similar to the class President Mark E. Keenum teaches, Emerson said she thought it would be a good opportunity to allow the SA president to gain new skills, and interact with more students on campus. She said the class serves as an elective for undergraduates and that it provides a unique way for students to transition into university life.

Emerson said, "Through getting involved, I have found what I like and dislike, and my strengths and weaknesses. You learn so much about yourself. And also, everyone needs to find their home on campus, whether that's an on-campus job or organization. Whatever it is, students need to find a place they can call home, where they fit—a place that is truly their own."

Additionally, Emerson says her staff will make an "outward focus" a top priority for the school year. Instead of focusing on just the Student Association's needs, she said she thinks it is important to remain committed to what the entire student body needs and wants for the school year. Whether it be lowering concession prices at athletic events, or working toward making student expenses, like textbooks, more affordable, she says she wants to make sure each decision made can benefit everyone on campus. Through Emerson's dedication and hard work as she continues her role as Student Association president, students can expect to see positive changes on MSU's campus.



Andrew Mahoney

"The best way to contribute to society is by serving something bigger than yourself. By getting involved on campus, you are able to see life from various perspectives and this privilege enables you to better interact with your peers and continue to grow as an individual," Andrew Mahoney said. "I have made many life-long friends through my involvement on campus."

Mahoney, a college coach for Mississippi State University's ACCESS program, is a senior studying biological science. He first began his involvement with the ACCESS program in 2016 as a peer mentor, and then worked his way up to a college coach. In this role, Mahoney said his main priority is to serve the students of the program, and most specifically, to concentrate on the daily activities of his assigned student. Each week, he meets with his student to organize a schedule, assists in budgeting money, and discusses different social situations. Additionally, he attends audited classes with the student to provide extra help.

Mahoney says his involvement with the ACCESS program has been a catalyst to his own growth as a student and a person. "I will forever be grateful for the opportunities and lessons learned during my time with the ACCESS program," he said. "I cannot put into words all it has given me."

As Mahoney begins his senior year, he said his main goal is to serve the ACCESS program and its students in whatever capacity is needed, and thoroughly enjoy every minute of his last year on campus.



Meghin Smith

Meghin Smith, a senior Interdisciplinary Studies major from Philadelphia, Mississippi, currently serves as the intelligence officer for the Army ROTC Bulldog Battalion, and as a student fellow for the Day One Leadership Program. Additionally, Smith has served as a Mississippi State Involvement Ambassador, Lambda Sigma junior advisor and Student Association Health and Wellness co-director.

As a current fellow in the Day One Program, Smith's primary duties include providing weekly support to freshman students that are volunteering through the program, and providing peer support as freshmen transition into college life. As a freshman, she said all of the opportunities available can become overwhelming. However, she still encourages everyone to try to get involved as early as possible, which can result in each person finding their home on campus early-on in their college career. Because she was involved in the Day One Program her first year on campus, she says, "As a freshman, I gained so much experience and knowledge through this program. Getting to know the students on campus and people in the community can be very rewarding, and that is one thing I hope everyone can take away from Day One."

Throughout her senior year as a fellow, Smith said her priority is to ensure that each student who passes through will gain knowledge about leadership, and to build cohesion among the freshman team.

"Day One has given me the opportunity to become a better communicator and fine tune my own leadership skills," she says. "And because of this opportunity, I know my very own leadership style and what works best for me."



Lindsey Vaughan

Lindsey Vaughan, a senior elementary education major, is the current Bulldog Swim School manager at the Joe Frank Sanderson Center. In this role, she works directly with swim instructors, creates and schedules swim lessons, and maintains a safe and fun environment for new swimmers. Additionally, she monitors the safety and progression of all swim lessons.

As Vaughan enters her senior year, she said she hopes to improve the Bulldog Swim Program at all levels, making it the best it can be for all swimmers.

"I want everyone who takes a swim lesson with us to feel happy and as though they have accomplished something in that lesson."

In this position, Vaughan says she has learned a lot about herself as a leader, and has also learned how to better cope with stressful situations in the work environment, interact with others in a professional setting, and work on time management skills.

"I think it is important to get involved on campus because you are able to form connections with others," she says. "You are able to create relationships and find opportunities that will allow you to grow, both professionally and personally."



Dee Stegall

Dee Stegall, a senior communication major, currently serves as the deputy chief of staff for the Mississippi State University Student Association and director of the S.P.A.R.K. Conference.

As deputy chief of staff, Stegall's primary role is to assist and direct the three freshman groups on SA. Additionally, he helps SA President Mayah Emerson with any special initiatives or tasks that she is trying to accomplish.

In his position as director of the S.P.A.R.K. Conference, Stegall said his main role is to oversee the conference, ensure that it is successful, and provide students with a smooth transition from high school to college life.

"I would say that both positions I hold currently have been the two largest of my collegiate career," he says. "They have taught me how to lead groups with strong personalities and the true meaning of leadership through service. I have seen with groups this large that you cannot be an effective leader unless you are willing to serve first."

Over the course of his senior year, Stegall says he wants to use his leadership roles to impact as many lives as possible. "I want to be a good steward of the influence I have been blessed with this year," he says.

Stegall said that he is a firm believer in the statement: "There is no success without a successor." Because of this, and in light of recent changes the SA staff will be making this year, he says he wants to make sure he is setting up future generations for success at Mississippi State.



SERVING OUR COUNTRY AND STUDENT AFFAIRS

BY DEVIN EDGAR

Mississippi State University's Andrew Rendon, director of the Student Affairs Office of Planning and Assessment and lieutenant colonel in Mississippi's Army National Guard, has been deployed three times since 1994.

Most recently, in June of 2017, Rendon was deployed to Kosovo on a peace-keeping mission. Battalion Commander of the 1st Battalion, 185th Aviation Regiment, Rendon said that his time in Kosovo was spent working with different countries—a truly multinational effort—to build and maintain peace and stability in the area.

After three deployments, Rendon said the transition from civilian and professional life to deployment never gets easier, although it is no longer a mystery.

"It's different every time," he said. "It's like switching from fifth gear to first gear in a matter of seconds."

Although the transition comes with challenges, Rendon said the culture at MSU that surrounds both student and professional veterans is something not every university has to offer.

"Here at Mississippi State, they understand the complexities, issues, and challenges associated with being a service member and that is honestly the most important part," he said. "Because once you understand, you can provide support to veterans and service members in the right ways."

MSU has always supported its men and women in uniform, Rendon said, noting the former Mississippi A&M College's military-friendly traditions. Since then, the university has opened the G.V. "Sonny" Montgomery Center for America's Veterans and has continued to educate faculty and staff members on the best ways to aid veterans and service members.

However, it is not just the services provided by the Center for America's Veterans that contribute to the veteran-friendly culture on campus. For example, Rendon said the College of Business offers distance education programs to accommodate service members and the research and development efforts "completely understand the needs for our service members" from a broad perspective, making it a university-wide initiative.

"When you look at those who have served in uniform during their time on campus, you realize that there are a lot of them. And that is because of the history MSU has of understanding the needs of veterans and service members, and developing those services to accommodate them," he said.

Rendon is currently studying at the United States Army War College after receiving the prestigious appointment earlier this year.



GIVING OPPORTUNITIES

The Division of Student Affairs is made better constantly through the support of our alumni and friends! Your generosity has aided us in providing opportunities and resources to promote our students' well-being and success during their time at Mississippi State. From the Holmes Cultural Diversity Center to New Maroon Camp, to the Collegiate Recovery Community, we strive to better our students through your financial support.

It's an exciting time to be a part of our university's growth and development as we approach our \$1 billion goal in the Infinite Impact Campaign. As we get closer and closer to meeting our fundraising goal, the time to play your part is now! Many of our outstanding alumni and friends joined in this year to make their personal impact at MSU.

Brian Hutson, class of 1987, honored his father by establishing the Bobby N. Hutson Endowed Scholarship in the G.V. "Sonny" Montgomery Center for America's Veterans. Drs. Michael and Wanda Dean chose to make their impact on the ACCESS Program through the Michael and Wanda Dean Housing Scholarship. Marilyn Crouther surprised her husband on his birthday by creating the Desi Crouther Endowed Scholarship for minority students at MSU.



I would love the chance to visit with you about the difference YOU could make at Mississippi State! Maybe it's through our Student Counseling Services, University Recreation, or Fraternity and Sorority Life as we eagerly look towards a brand-new student center. We at MSU and the Division of Student Affairs are so thankful for our alumni and friends who choose to invest in the lives of our outstanding students at our "dear ol' State!"

HAIL STATE!
Casey McGee, '15
Assistant Director of Development
Division of Student Affairs



HOMECOMING CARNIVAL

BY DEVIN EDGAR

In an effort to refresh and revamp Mississippi State University's Homecoming Week activities and traditions, directors of Homecoming and Pageants Bailey Walhood and Chasten McCrary organized the first annual Homecoming Carnival.

Originally, the idea of a carnival spurred from Walhood's "fixation on having a simple Ferris wheel." However, through research and budget limitations, she knew that would be a challenge.

"In the beginning, we weren't very sure of the specifics," Walhood said. "But, we passionately wanted for it to be a positive, inclusive week filled with new traditions for students, alumni and the surrounding community."

After generous support from the MSU Student Association, Dean of Student's Office and the President's Office, the Homecoming Carnival became a reality.

The event was complete with five fair rides, a dunk tank, hamster ball race inflatables, professional face painters, photo booths, and other traditional carnival games. Additionally, there were traditional carnival foods like snow cones, food trucks, cotton candy and funnel cakes.

**Mississippi State University
Homecoming 2018
November 2-4**

Walhood said the best part of the event, in her opinion, was that it was free of charge and open to the public, which meant everyone from students, MSU faculty and staff, and even local families could join in on MSU's Homecoming activities.

Although Walhood's and McCrary's terms as director are now over, she said she is confident that the second annual Homecoming Carnival will be just as successful.

"After last year, we were able to set goals and expectations that we wanted to pass on for the next directors to implement," Walhood said. "I'm so thrilled to have had a part in creating a new MSU tradition, and I cannot wait to see where it goes in years to come."



"Being MSU's very first Homecoming King was a great senior year experience."
-Anthony Daniels

WHY DID YOU CHOOSE TO RUN FOR HOMECOMING KING?

I wanted to run for Homecoming King because I have been very involved on campus throughout my college career and wanted to be a part of something big for my last year. When I saw that we were finally going to have a Homecoming King, I knew that I had to run for it, and I'm so happy I did. Being MSU's very first Homecoming King was a great senior-year experience.

Q & A WITH 2017 HOMECOMING KING

ANTHONY DANIELS

WHAT CLUBS AND ACTIVITIES WERE YOU INVOLVED IN DURING YOUR TIME AT MSU?

During my four years at MSU, I held quite a few roles. I was in the MSU Freshman Forum my first year, a member of Phi Gamma Delta Fraternity, Student Association Cabinet member, vice president of Programming for the Interfraternity Council, and a member of MSU's Fashion Board.

WHAT IS YOUR ADVICE FOR FUTURE BULLDOGS?

They should definitely get involved in different clubs and activities, and to try things out of their comfort zone – like running for Homecoming Court. MSU has something for every student on campus.

WHY DID YOU CHOOSE MSU?

I chose to attend MSU after attending Super Bulldog Weekend my senior year of high school. The atmosphere was really something special and getting a chance to hang out in Left Field Lounge at Dudy Noble Field definitely sealed the deal for me. MSU means so much to my family, pride and gave me a sense of identity. Once you're a bulldawg, you're a part of a lifetime commitment. There's no turning back.

WHAT ARE YOUR PLANS AFTER GRADUATION?

Well, I just graduated in May with a bachelor's degree in Psychology, and start nursing school at William Carey University in Hattiesburg, Mississippi, this fall.

WE'VE MOVED! YMCA RENOVATION

Originally built in 1914, the historic YMCA building reopened this summer after a complete renovation. The Vice President for Student Affairs, Dean of Students, Vice President for Finance, and General Counsel offices relocated to the YMCA building, located in the heart of campus on the corner between the Colvard Student Union and Chapel of Memories.



BEFORE



AFTER



BEFORE



AFTER



◀ Bottom: Exterior of building before and after renovation

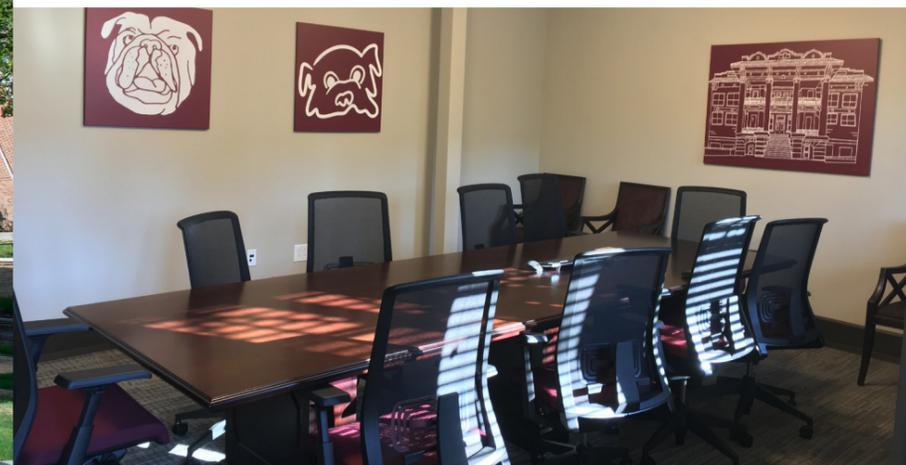
◀ Top right: Original ceiling of former ballroom, which is now the location of two-floors of office space

▲ Top: Before and after of second floor lobby space

▼ Bottom: Second floor conference room with student art

▶ Bottom right: Student Affairs' Student Leader Wall of Honor

*Before photos taken by Holly Hawkins



CHAPEL CARILLON

The rings of the carillon bells in the Chapel of Memories at Mississippi State University were upgraded for the first time in 20 years this past spring.

According to Raymond Brooks, the assistant dean of students, the older machine previously in use came to the university's chapel in 1994 and became unreliable. As the machine got older, more issues began to arise, including only being able to play the same tune at the same time every day.

Alumni began expressing their concern about not hearing the chapel bells as often— which is something many remember from their time on campus at MSU.

"It was very difficult to set up a playlist that would be conducive at all times," Brooks said. "So, the Division of Student



Affairs and the MSU Foundation began fundraising and accepting donations to replace and reprogram the machine."

With a generous gift from Dr. Missy Hopper, professor in the College of Education, and Dr. George Hopper, dean of the College of Agriculture and Life Sciences and College of Forest Resources, and through fundraising efforts, the new carillon installation began. Although the chapel bells were always electronic, the new carillon has more advanced technology that allows for the music to sound more authentic.

With the new equipment in use, MSU will be able to continue the tradition of the chapel bells ringing loudly across campus, on the hour, for years to come.



"This has really made a world of difference for our department," Rice said. "When you simplify the job internally, it allows for much better service externally."

The dispatch center is especially helpful for MSU students, faculty and staff that reside on campus, Rice said. Due to space and software restraints in the previous center, the dispatchers did not have much room for multi-tasking.

Overall, the new center provides a substantial improvement to the efficiency of MSU Police Department's work and allows both police officers and dispatchers to better focus on campus safety.

NEW DISPATCH CENTER

After renovating and updating the police station's facilities in the fall 2017, Mississippi State University now has a state-of-the-art emergency communications center.

Previously, the facilities only allowed one dispatcher to serve the MSU community. However, recent renovations now allow for two dispatchers to be housed in the space, which results in quicker and more effective service to those in need and makes room for possible collaboration between dispatchers.

While the previous software was outdated, MSU Chief of Police Vance Rice said the new center at the department's headquarters in the Butler Williams Building features a completely upgraded alarm system and computer software.

TAILGATES & TEES

The MSU Office of Parent and Family Services recognizes parents and family members as partners as well as a valuable resource for our students. The office serves as the liaison between families, students, and the university community while striving to guide families. With the hope of helping parents and family members understand and navigate the various campus resources, provide opportunities for parents and families to visit their student through intentional programming, and promote meaningful parental involvement that will allow for maximum student development and success.



After hosting Bulldog Family Weekend this past spring, the Office of Parent and Family Services saw a wave of positive feedback from families and decided to explore the option of hosting a fall event; thus Tailgates and Tees came to life. While thousands of families have established tailgate traditions, a large number of families have never experienced it. The Office of Family and Parent Services wanted to change that and to share the Bulldog tradition of southern tailgating. This event was advertised through the office's e-newsletter that goes out monthly to families and through social media. The tailgate took place on the Drill Field with families enjoying delicious tailgate food with their students before the homecoming football game.

Since this was the event's first year, a smaller crowd was expected. However, registration boomed, and over 800 guests attended Tailgates and Tees. Becky Faulk, coordinator of Parent and Family Services shares, "Everyone who attended seemed to appreciate the opportunity to have a place to tailgate with their student. They also enjoyed exploring our festive campus while attending an SEC football game. Some were even attending MSU with their student for the very first time."

As for next year's Tailgates and Tees, the Office of Parent and Family Services is already moving forward on how to make this event even better. As Faulk explains, "Tailgates and Tees will now take place in the spring, likely with a basketball game, and Bulldog Family Weekend will be held in the fall during Homecoming Weekend. We will triple the tents next time and spread out on the Drill Field. We will also have some activities, such as Corn Hole, for folks to enjoy. Hopefully, we will make it a bigger and better annual tradition."



A SEAT AT THE TABLE

BY SERENA COLVIN

The Division of Student Affairs sponsored “A Seat at the Table,” a two-day workshop that was designed to give under-represented students the confidence to get involved and take on leadership positions in organizations on campus.

The idea for “A Seat at the Table” came from the chief of staff for the Student Association, Nick Harris. Harris said, “Each summer all of the SEC student governments meet at a fellow institution to network, share ideas, and to discuss issues on our campuses. We found that although our school colors and mascot were different, we had a lot of similarities and some common issues. More than anything we noticed a lack of involvement of under-represented students at our institutions. We talked about how some students don’t want to get involved, and others want to get involved but don’t know how or feel discouraged. At the end of the day we talked about the need to support one another and be change agents on our campuses; that is when I decided I wanted to put on a workshop for the benefit of under-represented students at MSU.”

The first day of “A Seat at the Table” was a networking mixer composed of student leaders and advisors of various organizations across campus. In addition to the mixer, there were professional headshots, mock interviews, and resume critique breakout sessions.

On the second day, the keynote speaker was MSU alum Timothy Fair. Then students had three breakout sessions about the importance of submitting timely application materials, how to navigate between a group and individual interviews, learning from your failures and creating a positive direction out of them, and being intentional in involvement pursuits, as well as the importance of building a personal brand and networking. After the breakout sessions, there was a student leader panel composed of under-represented student leaders from throughout the SEC.

Students left with new connections to student leaders and organizational advisors in addition to the new insights into various organizations at Mississippi State.



REMEMBERING STEVEN COOPER

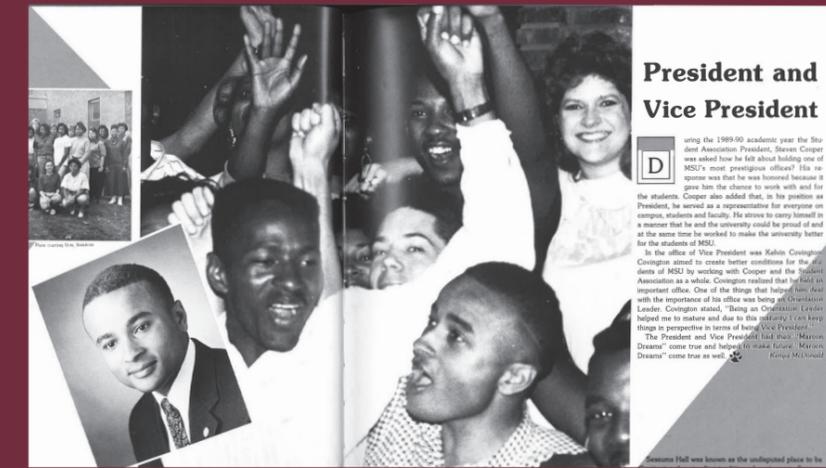
BY SERENA COLVIN

The Holmes Cultural Diversity Center dedicated a plaque to honor the late Steven Cooper, Mississippi State’s first African American student body president during the second annual Black Alumni Weekend. The unveiling featured remarks from Kelvin Covington, former Student Association vice president, and Tommy Verdell, Cooper’s former MSU roommate. The plaques were presented to the family by Jimmy Abraham, vice chairman of client and business relations for Cadence Bank, and the program concluded with remarks from Cooper’s family.

In the spring of 1989, Cooper was elected Student Association president, becoming the first African American student body president at MSU as well as the first African American student body president in the entire SEC. Cooper is remembered for his passion for Mississippi State and his policies of inclusion he embraced while in office.

Since Cooper, the importance of diversity has been a high priority at Mississippi State. “As we have seen with the position of chief diversity officer, it is a position that is specifically for the under-represented students and staff. It is with initiatives like this that the university’s dedication and commitment to diversity show. The Student Association now has seats for cultural organizations, homecoming has even been more inclusive, but overall the policies here have allowed diversity to grow at MSU,” said Ra’Sheda Forbes, assistant vice president of Multicultural Affairs and director of the Holmes Cultural Diversity Center.

Cooper’s legacy serves as an ongoing inspiration to all MSU students.



► Mississippi State hosted the second annual Black Alumni Weekend in conjunction with the Alumni Association, Black Alumni Advisory Council, and Holmes Cultural Diversity Center. This event had over 1,000 black alumni from all generations that are continuing to be pioneers and history makers as they pave the way for future leaders. The 2018 event had 600 more participants than the inaugural event.

WELLNESS INITIATIVES

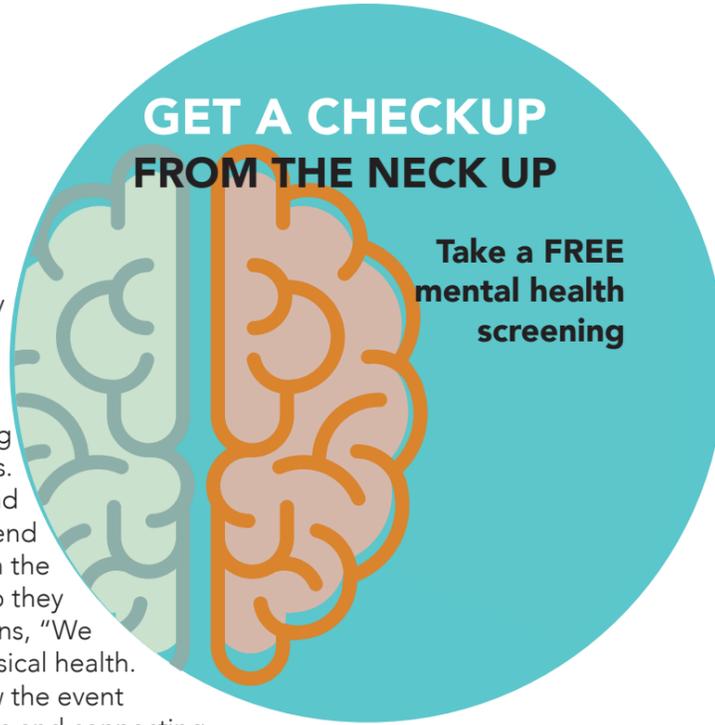
BY SERENA COLVIN

CHECKUP FROM THE NECK UP

College can be a time of great transition for many students, so MSU Student Counseling Services wanted to create an opportunity to reach students before a crisis emerges. The Checkup from the Neck Up event is a free, anonymous mental health screening that takes place each fall. The screening takes students a few minutes to complete, then mental health clinicians from Student Counseling Services will score the results and provide feedback to the students. The goal is to reach out to students before an emergency arises and inform them of campus resources. Each year over 100 students attend this event and get their mental health in check. The Check Up from the Neck Up is an excellent opportunity for students to obtain the help they need. Kim Kavalsky, coordinator of Mental Health Outreach, explains, "We want mental health to be viewed with the same importance as physical health. The title captures the idea of a yearly mental health exam. We view the event as breaking through the stigma that exists with mental health issues and connecting students to campus resources."

GET A CHECKUP FROM THE NECK UP

Take a **FREE** mental health screening



CLOTHESLINE PROJECT

The MSU Clothesline Project is a visual display that bears witness to sexual violence against people. The T-shirts are displayed on a clothesline on the Drill Field to increase the public's awareness of abuse.

A person can create a shirt for themselves, or create a shirt in memory of or advocating for another individual. "We have found that students empathize with what others have gone through. The Clothesline Project creates a unique opportunity for students to increase awareness around the area of violence, and be educated about the experience of others," said Leah Pylate, director of Health Promotion and Wellness. Mississippi State developed the Clothesline Project to increase awareness and offer an opportunity for survivors, friends, family members, and others in the community to come together to heal and express themselves through art.



CRC NATIONAL CONFERENCE

The Collegiate Recovery Community is a comprehensive support group for students in recovery at Mississippi State, and it offers a safe place for students in recovery on campus. This past spring the CRC attended the National ARHE conference to ensure that Mississippi State is staying current on its practices and procedures for helping students, as well as to ensure that the CRC is leading the way with resources it provides on campus to students in recovery. "I think the largest takeaway is that we are not alone in the journey as we continue to shape and grow our CRC. It was easy for me to see that we have a comprehensive program with amazing support, and in many respects, we are ahead of the curve when it comes to the programming and services we provide," said Blake Schneider, program coordinator, Collegiate Recovery Community.



MDMH GRANT

The Mississippi Department of Mental Health provides funds to MSU's Department of Health Promotion and Wellness through the Bureau of Alcohol and Drug Services' Prevention Services. There are four goals of the grant program:

- Provide education and resources to students through environmental strategies and campus-based programming.
- Identify high-risk students through the MSU HPW G.A.I.N. program, an alcohol education and screening program for risky drinking behaviors.
- Provide alternative activities for students on campus.
- Provide prevention education to faculty, staff, and community members on Substance Use Disorders.

Students benefit from the MDMH grant as they have an opportunity to attend educational and awareness events around the topics of alcohol, drugs, and other mental health issues.





This fall, the MSU Vietnam War memorial moved to its new location outside of Nusz Hall. Lt. Col. (Ret.) Brian Locke, director of Mississippi State's G.V. "Sonny" Montgomery Center for America's Veterans, and Vietnam War veteran Bob Kirkland unveiled it at its new location.

VIETNAM VETERAN WELCOME HOME

BY DEVIN EDGAR

Last fall, Mississippi State University's G.V. "Sonny" Montgomery Center for America's Veterans hosted a Vietnam veteran "Welcome Home Ceremony" to honor local veterans for their contributions in the war.

The ceremony was among many events hosted by the center during the week of Veterans Day, including the Veterans Luncheon, annual Veterans 5K, writing and arts competition, and Drill Field Ceremony.

Brian Locke, director of the Center for America's Veterans, said it was the first time MSU held a ceremony like this for Vietnam veterans, and that the idea really "took off" once they started planning it.

The event gained support from many departments across campus, Locke said, including Athletics, which allowed the center to use the Leo Seal Jr. Football Complex, and MSU President Mark Keenum, who made the ceremony's opening remarks. Additionally, Lieutenant Colonel Richard "Gene" Smith, an MSU graduate and United States Air Force veteran who flew close to 30 missions in the Vietnam War, was the guest speaker.

The "Welcome Home" was long overdue for many veterans who had yet to hear those words, Locke said, even 40 to 50 years later.

"It turned out to be an awesome event. I think it was truly touching and memorable for these veterans to have someone recognize their service in the Vietnam War after all of these years and extend a simple 'Welcome Home,'" Locke said.



Regina Young Hyatt,
Vice President for Student Affairs

It's been another exciting year at Mississippi State and in the Division of Student Affairs! More students, new and exciting programs, improved services... all part of our efforts to support our students' growth and development. This year's Maroon Traditions magazine highlights just a few of our outstanding students, staff, and programs in the Division of Student Affairs. I hope you'll enjoy reading about these people and programs and see the difference they are making in the student experience at Mississippi State.

I remain inspired by the dedication of our Marketing & Communications team, led by Katie Corban and assisted by numerous outstanding student employees, who once again put together this beautiful magazine. Katie's students offer an excellent example of the kind of work experiences we think student employment offers to our undergraduate students – each of them will leave us with work products and experiences that will make them more marketable to future employers. We currently have a Student Affairs "Innovation Team" working on training and recognition for our student employees. We know student employment is one of the many ways a student can engage in campus life, and one of the many things that can assist them in achieving their goal of a college degree. You can look forward to an update on the Innovation Team's work in next year's edition of Maroon Traditions. Until then,

*Hail State!
Regina*

DEPARTMENTAL ACCOMPLISHMENTS

2017-2018

CENTER FOR AMERICA'S VETERANS

MSU's Center for America's Veterans received several recognitions including: 2018 Military Times Best for Vets (Colleges and Universities) – top 50 in the nation; 2018 Military Friendly (Gold status) – 1st time we have achieved this level; 2018 Military Advanced Education and Transition TOP Colleges and Universities designation; 2018 Military Friendly Spouse University designation; 2018 Top Military Friendly Online Colleges designation; and 2018 Most Affordable Military Friendly Online Colleges designation.



The center hosted the 2018 Veterans' Affairs Administrators of Mississippi (VAAMS) Conference. This conference brought together higher education professionals from across Mississippi with a focus on services for student veterans and military dependents.

The center also increased programming and services through events such as the veteran fitness program (VetFit), the Veteran Horsemanship Program, Veteran's Week activities, and events sponsored by the Student Veteran Association (SVA). Increased scholarship funding through the creation of three additional endowed scholarships was another center achievement.

CENTER FOR STUDENT ACTIVITIES AND FRATERNITY & SORORITY LIFE

Fraternalities & Sororities at Mississippi State University raised over \$700,000 in philanthropy dollars and performed over 40,000 services hours.

Through the support of advisors, direction from campus partners, and the determination of student leaders, the National Pan-Hellenic Greek Council has grown its membership from 128 in 2017 to 195 this year. Mississippi State has the second largest NPHC community in the SEC.

The Center for Student Activities and Fraternity and Sorority Life hosted 274 events and programs in 2017-2018, which is 58 more than the previous year. These events and programs included new initiatives through Dawg Days, Dawgs After Dark, Greek training, and unique campus-wide events where over 88,597 people attended, and 120 events utilized the Org Sync tracking system.



COLVARD STUDENT UNION



MSU's New Maroon Camp recorded its largest number of participants in the history of the camp with over 1,000 campers.

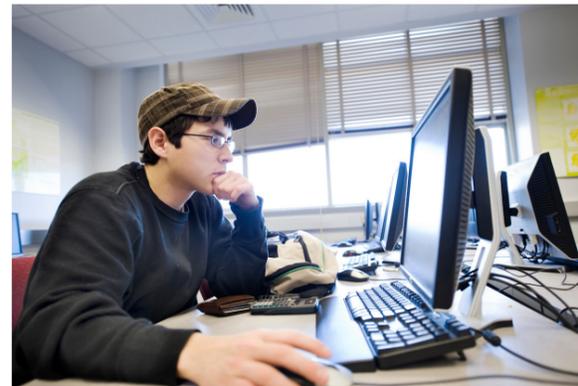
In collaboration with the Art Department, History Department, and Music Maker Productions, a complete overhaul of the Dawghouse was completed. Since the renovation, it has been added to the "Official College Tour" and experienced a 43% increase in scheduled events.



COMPUTER-BASED TESTING SERVICES

This MSU center administered 4,991 professional and certification exams for students and the community at-large for 2017-2018.

Approximately 1,100 students and parents became aware of CBT services through targeted outreach at local schools, orientations, and student activity fairs.



EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT

This department reached over 620 faculty, staff, and students with basic emergency response training.

It developed a severe weather video that is the first in a series of training and safety aids to be released to the university.

Also, updates and improvements to the emergency website provided preparedness tips and revised guides.



HEALTH PROMOTION AND WELLNESS



Forty-one staff and faculty members participated in Healthy Dawgs through MSU on the Move. The program was a 12-week nutrition and exercise program geared toward improving employee health.

HOLMES CULTURAL DIVERSITY CENTER



The first-ever Lavender Graduation Celebration sponsored by the Safe Zone Advisory Board, LGBTQ+ Union, and Safe Zone Advisory Board celebrated the accomplishments of LGBTQ+ students at the university. This event honored nine students and included more than forty participants, including students' families and friends.

Sponsored by the Men of Excellence Program, The State of Black Man Symposium: Transcending Stereotypes and Breaking Barriers featured all-day workshops and sessions designed to encourage academic and social success for students. This event included over 400 attendees with six institutions from across Mississippi.

STUDENT SUPPORT SERVICES



The MSU Department of Student Support Services and the University of Southern Mississippi have been selected to pilot a new peer mentoring initiative with the Mississippi Department of Rehabilitation Services.

SSS and the Holmes Cultural Diversity Center hosted a first-ever campus-wide celebration of first-generation college students.

The department also successfully piloted a new social support network program for Autism Liaisons designed to foster the development of a social network for students with Autism on campus.

ACCESS met with Secretary of State Delbert Hosemann, House Representative Steve Massengill, and State Treasurer Lynn Fitch at the Mississippi capitol.

HOUSING AND RESIDENCE LIFE



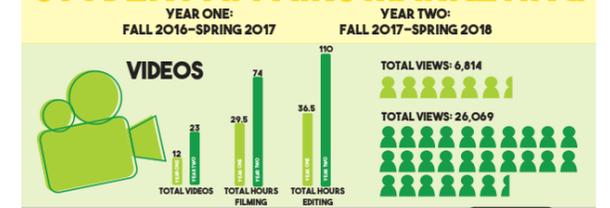
Housing and Residence life completed the cosmetic refurbishment of Hull Hall.

In fall 2017, HRL hosted the Mississippi Association of Housing Officers (MAHO) conference.

The department also finalized a public/private partnership between Mississippi State and Greystar, and construction on the 650 bed, mixed-use College View development began.

MARKETING & COMMUNICATION

STUDENT AFFAIRS MARKETING



STUDENT LEADERSHIP & COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

The Mississippi Racial Equity Community of Practice (RECoP) created a seven-week racial healing and listening curriculum, and implemented the curriculum with diverse cohorts in Tupelo, Jackson, Philadelphia, Biloxi, and Indianola. Partnering with an MSU research-methods class, the curriculum was demonstrated to powerfully impact the perspectives and racial healing of Mississippi citizens and MSU students. The curriculum is being adopted as a national model for Extension personnel training and delivery throughout the United States.

Student Leadership and Community Engagement brought on additional campus partners to successfully plan and implement the second annual MSU Collegiate Leadership Conference. The conference had 60% more participants (over 170 people) this year and reached eight other colleges and universities in the region. A large part of implementing the conference plans was carried out through the collaborative work of nine undergraduate students.

The Montgomery Leadership Program piloted, with the encouragement of the Provost's Office, e-portfolios with 28 upperclassman Fellows. Future plans possibly include implementing e-portfolios campus-wide to highlight student learning, development, and successes while also enabling students to articulate their growth and accomplishments for future post-graduate study and employment.

The Maroon Volunteer Center recruited and placed over 2,000 students, faculty, and staff for its three largest annual one-day service events: Service DAWGS Day, MLK Day of Service, and the BIG EVENT. These 2,000 volunteers completed over 85 community service projects within Oktibbeha County and accumulated over 6,000 hours of service.



UNIVERSITY RECREATION



The members of the MSU Disc Golf Club are National Champions after winning the National Collegiate Disc Golf Championship this past spring by an impressive 33 strokes.

University Recreation successfully completed the first GFIT (Group Fitness Instructor Training) program with seven participants. The eight-week program prepares novice group-exercise instructors for certification tests.

Several Sanderson Center improvements were made: the swimming pool's new filtration system utilizes sustainable materials, resulting in significant energy savings and improved water quality for patrons; all scoreboards were replaced in the gymnasiums; new kickboxing, TRX, and cycle studios were opened; and new and popular powerlifting was added.

STUDENT COUNSELING SERVICES



MSU's Student Counseling Services implemented a three-year grant through the American Foundation for Suicide Prevention to provide the Interactive Screen Program as a way to target students who are less likely to utilize SCS services.

The department completed first steps to become an APA accredited internship training site.

It also increased the number of students who attended group offerings and offered the Wellness-U series of psychoeducational workshops.

AWARDS & PRESENTATIONS

2017-2018

NASPA/SACSA INSTITUTE PARTICIPANTS



JuLeigh Baker, Programing Partnerships, Health Promotion & Wellness and Residence Life, Mississippi Association of Housing Officers, 2017



Monica Chen, Analysis of service-learning: perceived outcomes and influential factors. 2018 Gulf-South Summit for Service-Learning and Civic Engagement in Higher Education.



Ra'Sheda Forbes, 100 Black Women Candace Awards for Higher Education, 2017-2018



Christina Gladney, Third Place Dissertation Award Winner, March 2018 American Association of Blacks in Higher Education, 2018 Dissertation Competition



Danté Hill, Outstanding Mid-Level Professional of the Year, SEAHO (Southeastern Association of Housing Officers), 2018



Santee Johnson, Girl Scouts Hear of the South Woman of Distinction (Health & Wellness Category), 2018



Brian Locke, Green Zone; An Initiative to Support Student Veterans, Veterans Affairs Administrators of Mississippi, 2018



Montelleo Hobley and Julie Kelly participated in the NASPA Region III/SACSA New Professionals Institute



Teretha Conner and Amelia Rogers attended the NASPA Region III/SACSA Mid-level Manager Institute

DIVISIONAL AWARD RECIPIENTS



- Patrik Nordin** - Director of the Year
- Katie Corban** - Professional of the Year
- Kei Mamiya** - New Professional of the Year
- Montelleo Hobley** - Newcomer of the Year
- Audrey Bell** - Support Staff of the Year (Office/Clerical)
- Maria Ball** - Support Staff of the Year (Maintenance/Custodial)
- Jacob Torres** - Graduate Student of the Year - First Year
- Alli Adams** - Graduate Student of the Year - Second Year
- Unified Sports Program** - Outstanding Program of the Year
- University Recreation** - Outstanding Team of the Year





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