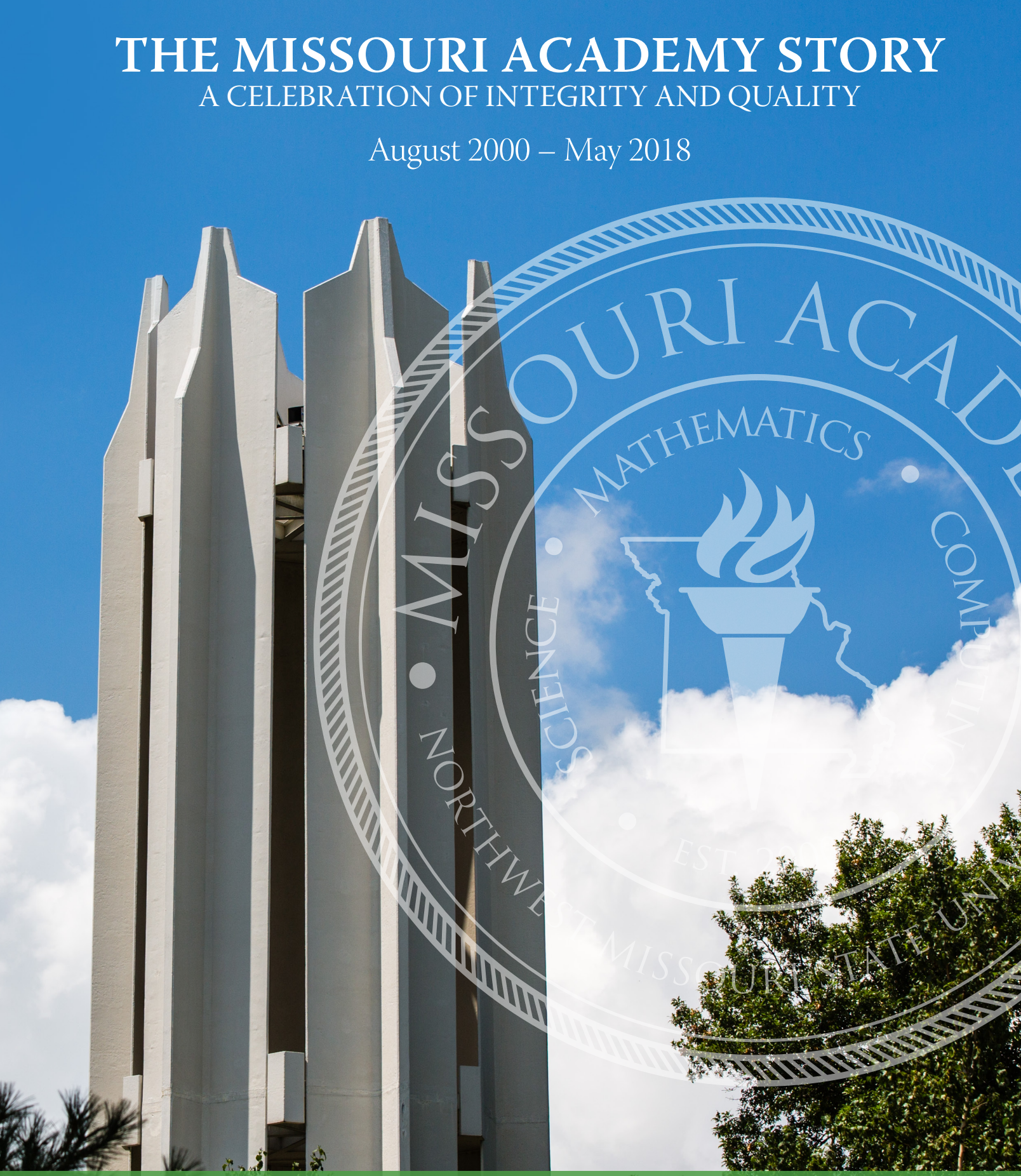
THE MISSOURI ACADEMY STORY

A CELEBRATION OF INTEGRITY AND QUALITY

August 2000 – May 2018



IMAGINE

a community of young scholars

GREETINGS,

The Missouri Academy of Science, Mathematics and Computing was a two-year, residential, early-college program for high-performing high school juniors and seniors, established in August 2000. Students who completed this program received a high school diploma and an Associate of Science degree. The program was created with three primary goals in mind:

- To serve the significant population of high-performing high school students for whom the final two years of traditional high school (11th and 12th grades) are not particularly useful for their academic and intellectual development and who can benefit greatly from a more challenging environment.
- To take steps in fulfilling a real societal need to increase the pool of high school students adequately prepared to succeed in science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM).
- To provide a sanctuary - a nurturing living and learning community for the gifted, talented and high-performing high school students.

The other dimension of success was the growth and development of students as a result of studying in this diverse, closely-knit living and learning community of scholars. Much of the evidence of the immeasurable success in student development comes from testimonials of graduates.

This overall success, in academics and student development, was largely due to the school's approach to integrity and quality, or IQ. The school operationalized quality in 'IQ' in terms of:

- A rigorous academic curriculum that was demanding, engaging and yet flexible; the curriculum was STEM focused, but contained key courses of study to develop communication skills, social sciences and the humanities.
- High student expectations in academic performance and personal character.
- A residential life program that was age-appropriate, complemented the academic program, and was designed to develop and nurture critical thinking skills.

As with all other programs at Northwest, the Missouri Academy received its funding from the state – through the University. In February 2017, the state of Missouri announced a significant reduction in financial support to public universities for the remainder of the 2017 fiscal year as well as the 2018 fiscal year. Thus, Northwest made a difficult decision to close the Missouri Academy at the end of May 2018 as part of its overall response to reduced state funding.

Personally, it was a privilege to be associated with Northwest Missouri State University and the Missouri Academy for over 14 years. I am truly humbled by the potential, abilities and successes of students who attended and graduated from the Missouri Academy.

Sincerely,

Dr. Cleo Samudzi

Published May, 2018

Dr. Cleo Samudzi was dean of the Missouri Academy from February 2004 through May 2018. Prior to joining Northwest Missouri State University in this role, Samudzi served at the Missouri Department of Higher Education as senior associate for academic affairs and planning and the Commissioner's Associate for Life Sciences. Before joining the Missouri Department of Higher Education, Samudzi was an assistant professor of biochemistry and chemistry at the University of Missouri-Columbia and associate scientist in molecular pharmacology at the National Cancer Institute in Frederick, Maryland. Samudzi received his Bachelor of Arts (cum laude) in biology and chemistry from Dakota Wesleyan University in Mitchell, South Dakota, and his Master of Science degree and doctorate (Ph.D.) degree in biological sciences/x-ray crystallography from the University of Pittsburgh in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania.

By many measures, in its 18 years of operation, the Missouri Academy was successful and exemplary in achieving these aforementioned broad goals. Some key academic achievements include:

AVERAGE **GPA** AT GRADUATION

3.65

AVERAGE ACCUMULATION OF

72 COLLEGE CREDITS IN TWO YEARS

NEARLY

100%

OF GRADUATES WENT ON TO COMPLETE **BACCALAUREATE DEGREES**

85%

OF GRADUATES PURSUED THEIR STUDIES IN **STEM** FIELDS

56%

OF GRADUATES PROCEEDED TO **POST-UNDERGRADUATE** STUDIES

TABLE OF CONTENTS

MISSOURI ACADEMY

SCIENCE | MATHEMATICS | COMPUTING

NORTHWEST MISSOURI STATE UNIVERSITY

TURNING AN IDEA INTO REALITY

What was the Missouri Academy?

In the early 1990s, Dr. Dean Hubbard, then president of Northwest Missouri State University, introduced the vision of an academic program designed to challenge and stimulate the minds of the best and brightest high school students. Many faculty and staff members at Northwest worked tirelessly to turn this vision into reality. The Missouri Academy of Science, Mathematics and Computing was established in August 2000 on the campus of Northwest.

The Missouri Academy was a two-year, STEM-focused, residential early-college program for academically high-performing and highly motivated high school students. It was located on the campus of Northwest in Maryville, Missouri. High school students selected to enroll in this program had to have completed 10th grade from their traditional high schools, and the Missouri Academy program replaced the junior and senior years of traditional high school.

The curriculum was rigorous and consisted of all college coursework taught by professors at Northwest. Missouri Academy students sat side-by-side in the same classrooms with traditional university students, and professors had the same high expectations for these students as they did of traditional university students. All courses taken by Missouri Academy students were taught on the Northwest campus and by full-time faculty members. Students enrolled in coursework in competition with degree candidates at Northwest and that was offered as a regular part of Northwest's academic curriculum.

High school students who successfully completed this program received an Associate of Science degree, as well as a high school diploma. It was an opportunity for exceptional students to live and study in a community of peers. The Missouri Academy was highly selective and only the best and brightest students were admitted to undertake what was arguably one of the most difficult high school curricula in the Midwest.

Timeline showing critical events resulting in the establishment of the Missouri Academy:

1989 – 1995:

- Dr. Dean Hubbard, Northwest's president, had numerous discussions with Dr. Robert Bartman, the commissioner of the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE), and Dr. Kala Stroup, the commissioner of the Missouri Department of Higher Education (MDHE) on how best to create and fund the concept of an academy.
- Challenging issues included:
  - How to fund the 80% Average Daily Attendance from DESE to the Missouri Academy through sending schools
  - Where the rest of the funding would come from
  - How students would receive high school diplomas
  - The best way to work with superintendents of sending schools (Many superintendents were opposed to the idea of a Missouri Academy)
- No other higher education institution came forward or showed interest in the concept of an academy. Missouri legislators were not involved in these discussions.

1995 – 1999:

- Missouri SB/HB 340 was signed into law. This act authorized the Coordinating Board for Higher Education (CBHE) to review the mission statements and needs of state higher educational institutions, to review applications from institutions seeking a statewide mission, and to determine whether such institutions qualified under the act for a statewide mission or additional resources.
- Additional funding under this act was called Mission Enhancement.
- Public higher education institutions proposed a variety of projects for these funds and Northwest chose to use a portion of its allocation of the Mission Enhancement funds to create and fund the Missouri Academy. The other portion of Missouri Academy funds would come from the Average Daily Attendance funding from DESE.

1999 – 2000:

- Northwest, DHE and DESE worked together to finalize important details about:
  - Funding structure, sources and expectations
  - Governance
  - Academy student graduation requirements
- Northwest alone was responsible for hiring the staff, setting up additional faculty, and anything else needed to get the Missouri Academy fully operational. Cooper Hall was partially renovated and was the residential facility for Missouri Academy students as well as Missouri Academy staff offices.
- In August 2000, the Missouri Academy welcomed the first class of 41 high-performing high school students. That cohort appropriately was named the Pathfinders.

Rationale for the Missouri Academy

Many traditional secondary schools did not adequately provide challenging and rigorous educational experiences for their high-performing students. Some of the reasons behind this included the following:

- Dwindling resources and funding from the state for K-12 education meant smaller schools (i.e., those with 200 students per grade level or less) and rural schools could not afford to provide the necessary breadth and depth in their curricula. Advanced instruction at the high school usually meant advanced placement courses (or advanced placement-like courses) or international baccalaureate courses or dual credit courses.
- K-12 schools were rewarded largely by how well they raised the scores of students at the low end of the academic performance spectrum. Historically, this approach neglected students in the top 10%. Thus, these students did not find the academic experiences rewarding at a critical time in their lives when they most need the challenge and nurturing – especially during the junior and senior years of high school.
- Many school administrators and parents feared that providing challenging academic experiences, especially through acceleration, might have negative social consequences for the gifted or "accelerated" student. Of course, research and the 17-year history of the Missouri Academy did not support this fear.

The proliferation of charter schools in Missouri between 1999 and 2006, and the continuing growth and popularity of homeschooling were clear indicators that the public has a thirst for exploration of non-traditional learning options. The Missouri Academy served this need.

The primary market for student recruitment for the Missouri Academy was Missouri and neighboring states, and the secondary market was abroad – traditionally South Korea, China, India and some European countries such as Greece and Spain. There was no shortage of qualified high-performing students in the primary market. Approximately 5 percent of more than 70,000 rising sophomores at public schools in Missouri met the minimum standards for admission to the Missouri Academy. The challenge was always:

- (1) designing efficient ways of reaching this target population and
- (2) making sure this target population including students and parents understood the benefits of the Missouri Academy experience.

There was also a moderate-to-high demand for the unique educational experience offered at the Missouri Academy in countries like South Korea, China, India and Panama. Once again, the challenge was the same abroad as in Missouri – reaching the target audience with the right message in a timely manner.

HOW THE PROGRAM WAS ORGANIZED AND MANAGED

Personnel

The Missouri Academy fit well as an academic unit under the purview of the Northwest's chief academic officer, the Provost. Figure 1 shows the organizational chart for Missouri Academy staff. Typically, 10-15 regular full-time Missouri Academy staff members were needed for 120 to 160 students.

The overall role and function of the Missouri Academy staff was to identify high-performing high school sophomores and provide them with a supportive and nurturing living and learning environment that complemented the educational experiences at the University. In order to provide essential services to students and stakeholders, the Missouri Academy staff was organized into four overlapping and interdependent functional units:

- ***Administration:*** This unit provided leadership, oversight and support for all activities of the Missouri Academy and was the principal liaison with external constituencies. The head of this unit, the dean of the Missouri Academy, was also head of all other units and activities of the Missouri Academy.
- ***Recruitment:*** This unit developed materials to promote and advertise the Missouri Academy. It also recruited and enrolled academically talented and high-performing high school sophomores. This unit worked with prospective students and their parents, as well as alumni. The director of enrollment was head of this unit.
- ***Academic Affairs***: This unit provided academic support services for Missouri Academy students, assisted in proper registration, monitored student academic performance, and helped students transition from the Missouri Academy to traditional college or university life through the college application process. The director of academic affairs was head of this unit.
- ***Residential Life:*** This unit developed a residential life program that complemented the academic program. Because of their day-to-day contact with students and their parents, residential life staff members were much more directly involved with ensuring positive educational and day-to-day needs of Missouri Academy students. The director of residential life was head of this unit.
- ***Counseling:*** This unit provided counseling and psychosocial services to students. The director of counseling, who was head of this unit, was a licensed counselor. The director met with and provided mental health services to all students – individually and in groups – multiple times throughout the year.

All Missouri Academy staff members – professional staff, office support staff and residential counselors – had the relevant background experience and education to effectively carry out their responsibilities and ensure the success of Missouri Academy.

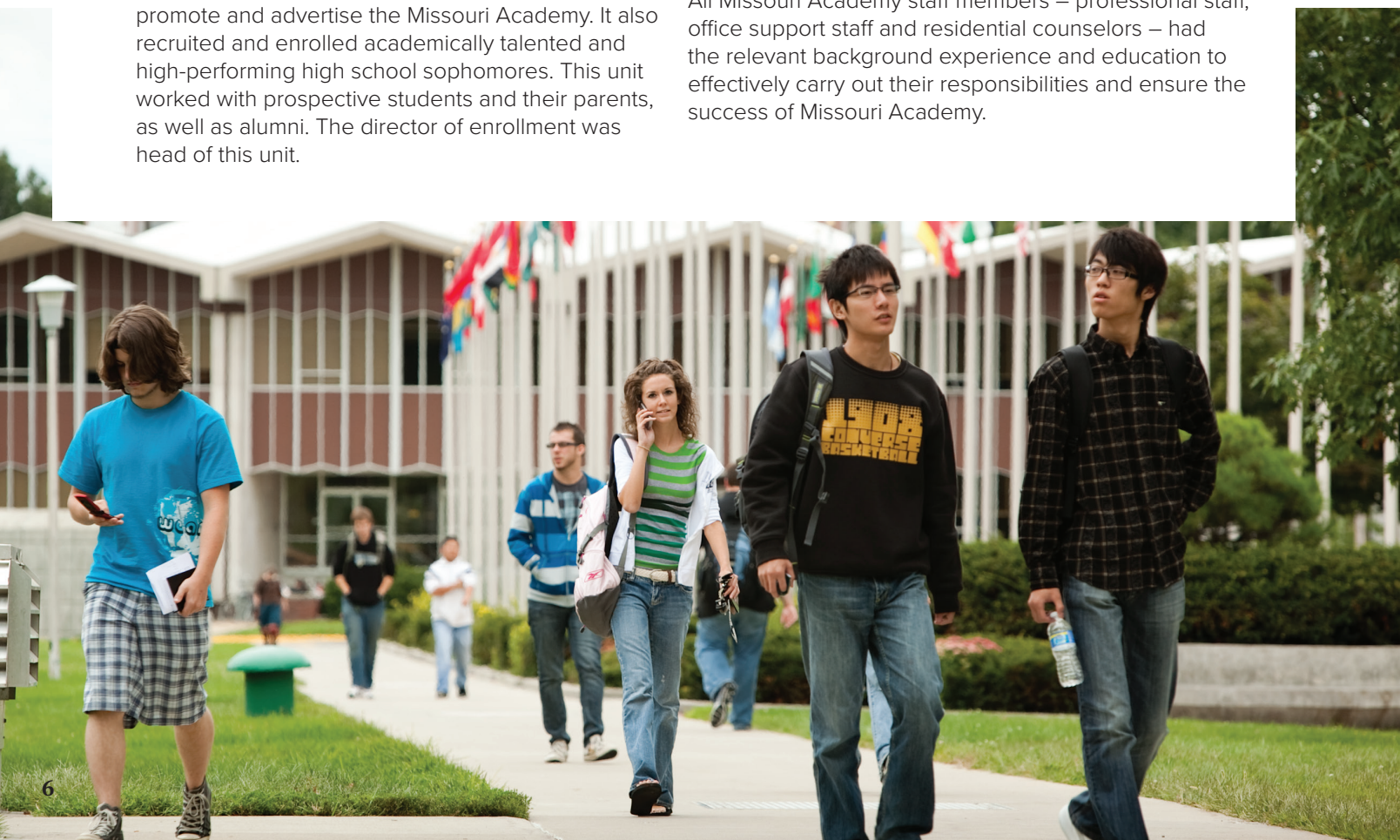
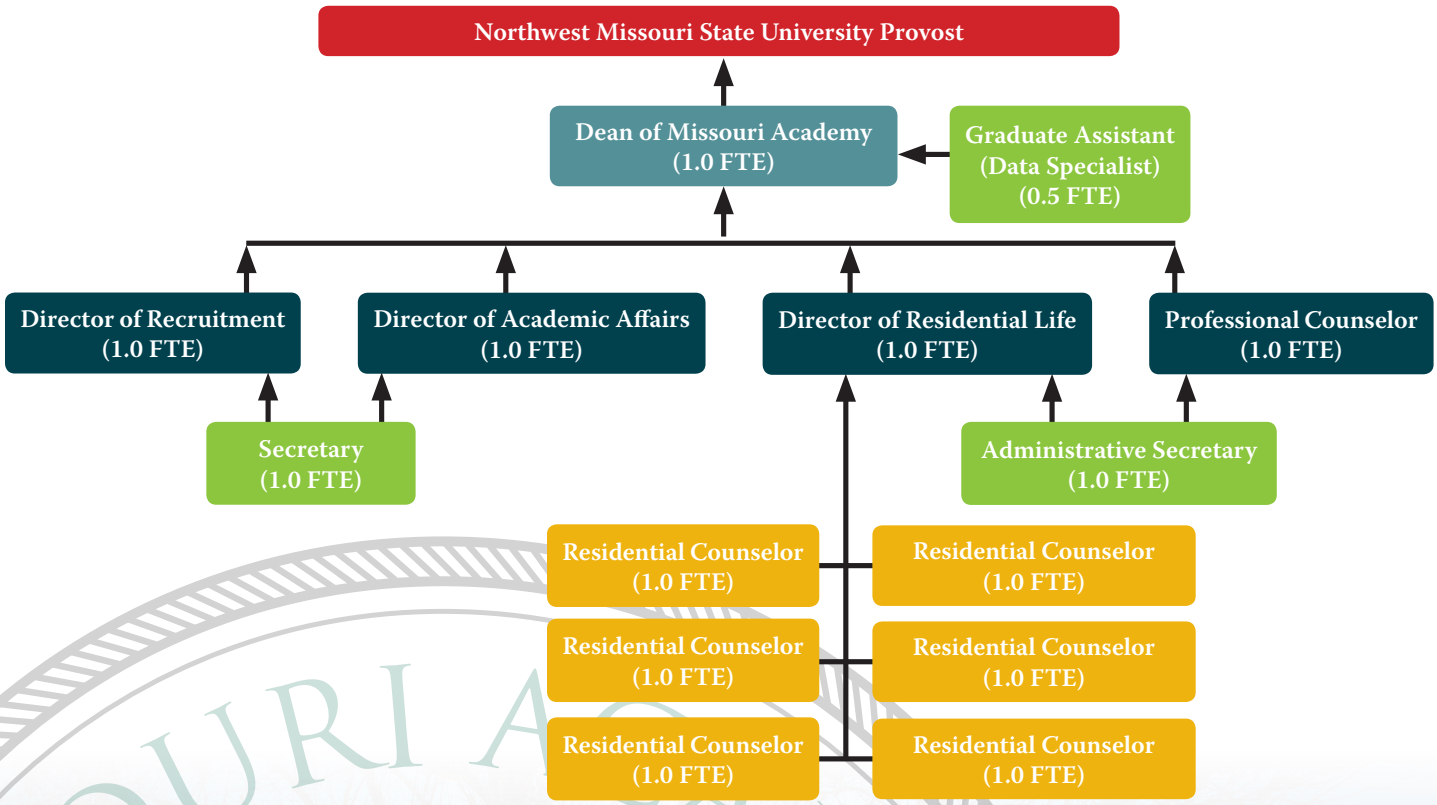


FIGURE 1: MISSOURI ACADEMY ORGANIZATIONAL CHART



STAFF OF THE MISSOURI ACADEMY

These are the full-time staff members of the Missouri Academy who transformed an idea into reality. Their collective role was to identify high-performing high school sophomores, create a supportive living and learning environment while they were in residence on campus for two years, and instill integrity and quality.

Michelle Allen
Secretary for Admissions
2000-2003

Maurice Bolden
Residential Counselor
2011-2012

Robert Bryant
Director of Enrollment
2000-2017

Casey Bulen
Residential Counselor
2014-2016

Lisa Carrico
Residential Counselor
2003-2006

Amea Chandler
Residential Counselor
2008-2013

Ernesto Cruz
Residential Counselor
2001-2003

Doug Daubert
Director of Student Development
2003-2005

Neal Davis
Director of Student Achievement
2003-2017

Matt DeBlieck
Residential Counselor
2009-2014

Dee Dino
Executive Secretary
2005-2011

Sean Eddington
Residential Counselor
2008-2011

Hayley Ellis
Residential Counselor
2017-2018

Beth Eppinger
Residential Counselor
2004-2009

Ed Farquar
Interim Director of Missouri Academy
2003-2004

Drew Fisher
Director of Counseling
2014-2017

Jerry Fuentes
Residential Counselor
2007-2011

Mayur Gangala
Residential Counselor
2015-2017

Matt Garrett
Residential Counselor
2004-2006

Deborah Guffy
Assistant Dean of Missouri Academy
2000-2003

Lisa Hamblen
Residential Counselor
2006-2012

Joseph Harvey
Residential Counselor
2000-2003

Cassie Herzog (Hunter)
Residential Counselor
2006-2008

Sam Jennings
Director of Student Development
2006-2011

Lori Kelley
Residential Counselor
2000-2006

Jackie Kibler
Director of Counseling
2010-2014

Terry King
Director of Academics
2000-2004

Jamie Kwon
Residential Counselor
2013-2016

Winston Mitchell
Residential Counselor
2006-2008

Emily Nguyen
Residential Counselor
2016-2017

A Norman
Residential Counselor
2014-2016

Bob O'Brien
Residential Counselor
2006-2007

Will Perkins
Director of Admission & Recruitment
2003-2006

Russ Pinizzotto
Dean of Missouri Academy
2000-2003

Joshua Rector
Residential Counselor
2011-2015

Ernestine Rich
Residential Counselor
2012-2014

Kristina Rittel
Residential Counselor
2010-2012

Cleo Samudzi
Dean of Missouri Academy
2004-2018

Diana Schmitz
Director of Academics
2001-2011

Margaret Sebastian
Residential Counselor
2009-2013

Jackie Smith
Residential Counselor
2001-2003

Susan Smith
Administrative Secretary
2006-2018

Elizabeth Stafford
Residential Counselor
2014-2016

Megan Stewart
Secretary for Enrollment
2006-2007

Toni Streuby
Secretary for Academics
2000-2005

Laci Supinger
Secretary for Admissions
2002-2003

Robert Theodore
Director of Counseling
2000-2010

AnDi Tompkins
Coordinator for Res Life
2000-2003

Becky Troyer
Executive Secretary
2000-2006

Pele Trump
Secretary for Enrollment & Academic Affairs
2000-2018

Andrea Wagner
Secretary for Enrollment
2003-2006

Laura West
Residential Counselor
2000-2003

Theresa Wilson
Director of Admissions
2000-2002

LaNee Wood
Residential Counselor
2016-2018

Matthew Woolery
Residential Counselor
2017-2018

Others who deserve recognition for their dedicated service at different times at the Missouri Academy include, the Visiting Scholar – Kelly Liu, and graduate assistants: Greg Dombeck, Tim Gillissen, Egon Heidendal, Avinash Kaur, William Milosevich, Jessica Platte, Jillian Pointer, Daniel Swan, Tyler Tapps, Brad Whitsell, Corey Wright, Naren Divi, Emily Fuentes, Kelly Hainline Northrup and Corey Wright.


2000-2001


2001-2002


2002-2003


2003-2004


2004-2005


2005-2006


2006-2007


2007-2008


2008-2009


2009-2010


2010-2011


2011-2012


2012-2013


2013-2014


2014-2015


2015-2016


2016-2017


2017-2018

ADMISSION AND SELECTION

Selection Criteria

The recruitment and selection period extended from September through May. There were three distinct groups of students that the Missouri Academy recruited and evaluated:

- Domestic students who were in the process of completing their 10th grade year in high school,
- Domestic students who were home-schooled, and
- International students.

While the overall goal was to identify applicants who were likely to succeed in the rigorous university, STEM-focused curriculum, the actual evaluations for these three groups differed slightly. A Missouri Academy Admissions Committee, consisting of four senior staff members, was responsible for the selection process.

(a) For domestic students completing their traditional 10th grade year, the Admissions Committee used the following criteria for selection:

- Completed mathematics courses in Algebra II and Geometry (passing grades of B or higher);
- Standardized test scores (ACT or SAT): (a) minimum ACT composite score of 23, Mathematics 24, English 23, and Reading 23; OR (b) minimum SAT I total score of 1060, with mathematics sub-score of 560;
- Cumulative GPA of 3.5 or higher for courses taken in 9th and 10th grades (this cumulative GPA takes into account only core courses such as mathematics, sciences, history, American government and English);
- Class rank in the top 10 percent;
- Evaluations by three teachers: mathematics teacher, English teacher and science teacher;
- Official school records including transcripts, disciplinary record, absences and tardies.

The deadline for submission of application material was in March, and admission decisions were completed and sent in April of each recruitment cycle.

(b) For domestic students who were home-schooled, the Admissions Committee used the following criteria for selection:

- Narrative: One-page reflection on educational activities for each year the student was home-schooled (grades 8, 9 and 10) – the narrative was written by the student or parent
- Course syllabi for all courses in which the student enrolled, the work performed and the grades on assignments
- Tangible Scholarly Work: Copies of tangible scholarly work demonstrating evidence of progress within a course and from course to course, completed by the student for mathematics, science, English and technology courses (organized in a chronological order – from earliest to latest, indicating grade level and year). Examples might include worksheets, research papers, essays, creative writing samples, science lab reports.
- Standardized test scores (ACT or SAT): (a) minimum ACT composite score of 23, Mathematics 24, English 23, and Reading 23; OR (b) minimum SAT I total score of 1060, with mathematics sub-score of 560;

The deadline for submission of application material was in March, and admission decisions were completed and sent in April of each recruitment cycle.

(c) For international students, the Admissions Committee used the following selection criteria:

- Evaluation of 9th and 10th grade academic transcript: The Missouri Academy Admissions Committee evaluated the student's academic transcript to see if the student had taken courses in advanced level algebra or higher-level geometry and/or trigonometry or other mathematics courses, chemistry, biology and English. The committee also looked at the student's class rank. Students ranked in the top 5-10 percent were given higher preference.
- Score on the Missouri Academy Entrance Examination: The Missouri Academy had its own entrance exam called the Missouri Academy Entrance Exam (MAEE). The MAEE had two parts: an English section and a Mathematics section. The English section carried 60 percent of the points and the Mathematics carried 40 percent. All international students were required to take the MAEE administered by Missouri Academy staff.
- Performance at the Interview: International students were also required to have a face-to-face or Skype interview with Missouri Academy staff members. The purpose of the interview was to determine the candidate's facility with the English language. The interviewing staff focused on how well the candidate understood the interviewer's questions/comments and how well the interviewer understood the candidate's responses.
- The Standardized English Test for Non-Native English Speakers: International students were expected to take either the TOEFL or the IELTS test. The minimum iBT score was 79/120, and that for the IELTS score was 6.0/9.0.
- Other factors: These included evaluations from two teachers and a listing/description of awards received in 9th and 10th grades.

International students were evaluated for admission on a "Rolling" basis. Applications were evaluated and acted upon from September through May.

Newly Accepted Students

All newly accepted domestic students were required to attend a one-day Summer Orientation session in May or June. Summer Orientation served two primary purposes:

- (1) to familiarize new students and their parents or guardians with the Missouri Academy staff, facilities, and policies and procedures, and
- (2) to enable the Missouri Academy staff to learn more about the new students. Information collected about individual students was used by the Missouri Academy staff to provide targeted services for the students.

Students were also expected to move in about two weeks before the start of fall trimester classes at Northwest to attend the Bridge Program. The Bridge Program was designed to help students transition academically from the 10th grade high school environment to a university setting with a demanding course load. This Bridge Program effectively improved the student's readiness for coursework, and helped the student develop new study habits in preparation for the level, complexity and pace of the curriculum while at the Missouri Academy.

All newly accepted international students were required to move in about five weeks before the start of fall trimester classes at Northwest to attend the Cultural Transition Program (CTP). CTP was a program that helped newly accepted international students acclimatize to their new living and learning environment socially and academically. Students were required to take a 3-credit hour Introduction to College Writing course for four weeks. Outside class, activities and social events were designed to culturally familiarize and integrate students to their new home – the Missouri Academy.

MISSOURI ACADEMY CURRICULUM

Curriculum

The Missouri Academy curriculum was STEM-focused and consisted entirely of university coursework taught by professors at Northwest. Missouri Academy students sat in the same classrooms with traditional university students, and professors had the same academic performance expectations of Missouri Academy students as they did of traditional university students. All courses taken by Missouri Academy students were taught on the Northwest campus and by full-time faculty members. Students enrolled in coursework in competition with degree candidates at Northwest and that was offered as a regular part of Northwest's academic curriculum.

High school students who successfully completed this program received an Associate of Science degree as well as a high school diploma. It was an opportunity for exceptional students to live and study in a community of peers. The Missouri Academy was highly selective and only the best and brightest students were admitted to undertake what was arguably one of the most difficult high school curricula in the Midwest.

Figure 2 shows the Missouri Academy curriculum/ structure of the Associate of Science degree in science and mathematics as implemented from 2000 to 2011. Students were expected to maintain a minimum cumulative GPA of 2.75 to remain enrolled at the Missouri Academy and to graduate.

Beginning in 2013, the Missouri Academy curriculum was slightly modified by introducing "tracks". Thus, students could take the 54 credit hours of required common core courses, and then choose from one of four tracks: science and mathematics, biomedical sciences, engineering and physics, or computer science. Figure 3 shows the modified curriculum including tracks.

Figure 2. Missouri Academy Curriculum: 2000 – 2012

Discipline	Course
Science: • Biological/Life Sciences • Chemical Sciences • Physical Sciences	Principles of Biology and Lab (4) General Microbiology (4) OR Genetics (4) Chemistry I and Lab (4) Chemistry II and Lab (5) Classical Physics I and Lab (5) Classical Physics II and Lab (5)
Mathematics	Pre-Calculus (4) Calculus I (4) Calculus II (5)
Computer Science	Scientific Computing (3) Computer Programming I (3)
English/Communication:	Introduction to College Writing (3) – For International Students Composition I (3) Composition II (3) Literature (3) Fundamentals of Oral Communication (3)
Humanities/Social Sciences: • History • Political Science • Humanities	America - A Historical Survey) (3) Introduction to American Government and Politics (3) Humanities elective (3)
Seminar/Colloquium:	Seminar (for first-year students) (1) Colloquium (for second-year students) (1)
Total minimum credits required to graduate = 67	

Figure 3. Missouri Academy Curriculum: 2013-2018

Part-1: The Common Core Required For All Students

Discipline	Course
Science: • Biological/Life Sciences • Chemical Sciences • Physical Sciences	Principles of Biology and Lab (4) Chemistry I and Lab (4) Chemistry II and Lab (5) Classical Physics I and Lab (5) Classical Physics II and Lab (5)
Mathematics	Pre-Calculus (4) Calculus I (4)
Computer Science	Computer Programming I (3)
English/Communication:	Introduction to College Writing (3) – For International Students Composition I (3) Composition II (3) Literature (3) Fundamentals of Oral Communication (3)
Humanities/Social Sciences: • History • Political Science	America - A Historical Survey (3) Introduction to American Government and Politics (3)
Seminar/Colloquium:	Seminar (for first-year students) (1) Colloquium (for second-year students) (1)
Total credits in the required common core courses = 54	

Part-2: Students were required to choose one of the following four tracks

Discipline	Course
Track-1: **Science and Mathematics**	General Microbiology (4) OR Genetics (4) Scientific Computing (3) Calculus II (5) Humanities elective (3)
Track-2: **Biomedical Sciences**	General Microbiology (4) Genetics (4) Probability & Statistics (3) Introduction to Ethics: Bio-Medical Ethics (3)
Track-3: **Engineering and Physics**	Calculus II (5) Classical Mechanics I and Lab (4) Statics (3) Humanities elective (3)
Track-4: **Computer Science**	Computer Programming II (3) Data Structures (3) Discrete Mathematics (3) Network Fundamentals (3) OR Database Systems (3) Humanities elective (3)
Total minimum credits required to graduate: Common Core + One Track = 67	


Northwest

STUDENT LIFE

While on campus at Northwest, Missouri Academy students lived in one residential facility, specifically designed for adolescents. The facility, North Complex, had safety features, a main lounge, a computer lab, a laundry room and a kitchen for student use. Four to six Residential Counselors (RCs) lived with students in the same facility. RCs provided daily oversight and had extensive contact with students, and with the students' parents regularly as needed. RCs were also crucial in implementing policies, programming, co-curricular and extra-curricular activities appropriate for adolescents 15-18 years of age.

Student Support: One critical role of the Missouri Academy staff was to create a living, learning, nurturing and supportive environment for students. This support was carried out in two ways:

- (1) monitoring student progress (academic and non-academic) and providing immediate intervention, and
- (2) programming of co-curricular and extracurricular activities to complement their academic studies and promote student personal growth and development.

Programming of Co-curricular and Extra-curricular Activities: The theory of development that the Missouri Academy used and that applied most directly to the Missouri Academy residential experience is Arthur Chickering's Seven Vectors of Student Development. Using this theory, the design of the residential life experience and programming of co-curricular and extracurricular activities were centered around the seven vectors:

- (1) developing competence,
- (2) managing emotions,
- (3) moving through autonomy toward interdependence,
- (4) developing mature interpersonal relationships,
- (5) establishing identity,
- (6) developing purpose, and
- (7) developing integrity.

The Missouri Academy used these vectors and translated them into a working holistic programming model that responded to the needs of developing adolescents. This working model was comprised of two key components that addressed student development issues and provided many opportunities for personal growth. The components of the model were educational or social in nature, and provided opportunities for active engagement by students. The outline of the Missouri Academy operating programming model was as follows:

- Educational Programming: was designed to help students learn outside of the classroom; to promote diversity, wellness, intellect, and citizenship; and to help students become independent thinkers and productive members of the community. The areas of emphasis included cultural activities, wellness activities, intellectual activities and citizenship activities;
- Social Programming: was designed to create a sense of community within the Missouri Academy by promoting companionship, compatibility, and sociability among students and to help students build meaningful and interdependent relationships.

The success of each component was measured by student participation as well as student satisfaction surveys. This programming model was designed to provide a robust experience and development to prepare academically high-achieving adolescents for the next chapter in their formal education at a college or university after their graduation from the Missouri Academy.

Missouri Academy students were free to participate in Northwest's 150-plus clubs and organizations or to participate in just those clubs and organizations for Missouri Academy students only. Examples of clubs, organizations and other activities in which students participated include:

- Missouri Academy Student Government Association (SGA)
- Community Service Club
- Translation Club
- Discovering International Societies and Cultures Organization (DISCO)
- Missouri Academy Yearbook
- Prom & Dance
- FIRST Robotics
- Math Team
- Future Business Leaders of America (FBLA)
- Health Occupations Students of America (HOSA)
- BETA Club
- Envirothon
- Science Olympiad
- Yoga Club (Academite Yogi)
- Performing Arts and Music (PAMA)
- Residence Hall Association (RHA)

Housing and Student Rooms

All Missouri Academy students were housed in North Complex (Cooper Hall and Douglas Hall). Students were expected to have roommates – two per room. Rooms were approximately 12 feet by 12 feet. There were two beds that could be separate or bunked. Each bed was about 7.5 feet by 4 feet. Two desks were provided per room. Students provided their own small refrigerator and/or microwave oven. Roommates were expected to communicate and to discuss who brought what and how they shared. Each student had a key to their room, as well as key/fob to their floor and to the building.

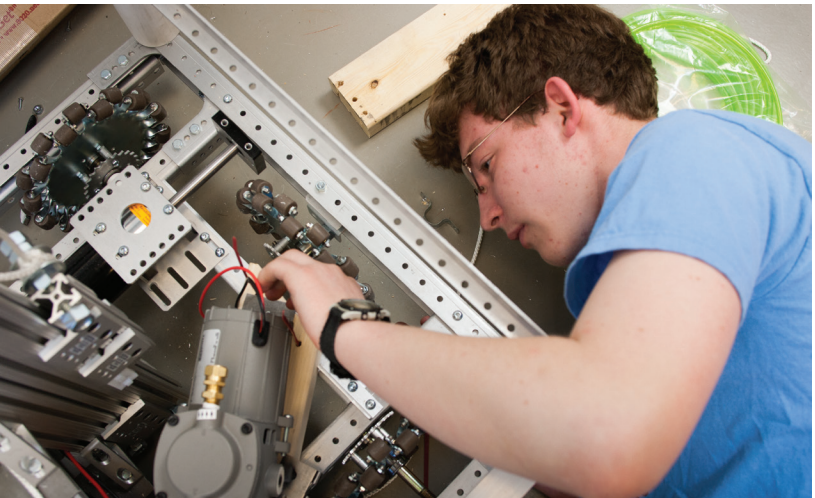
Food Options

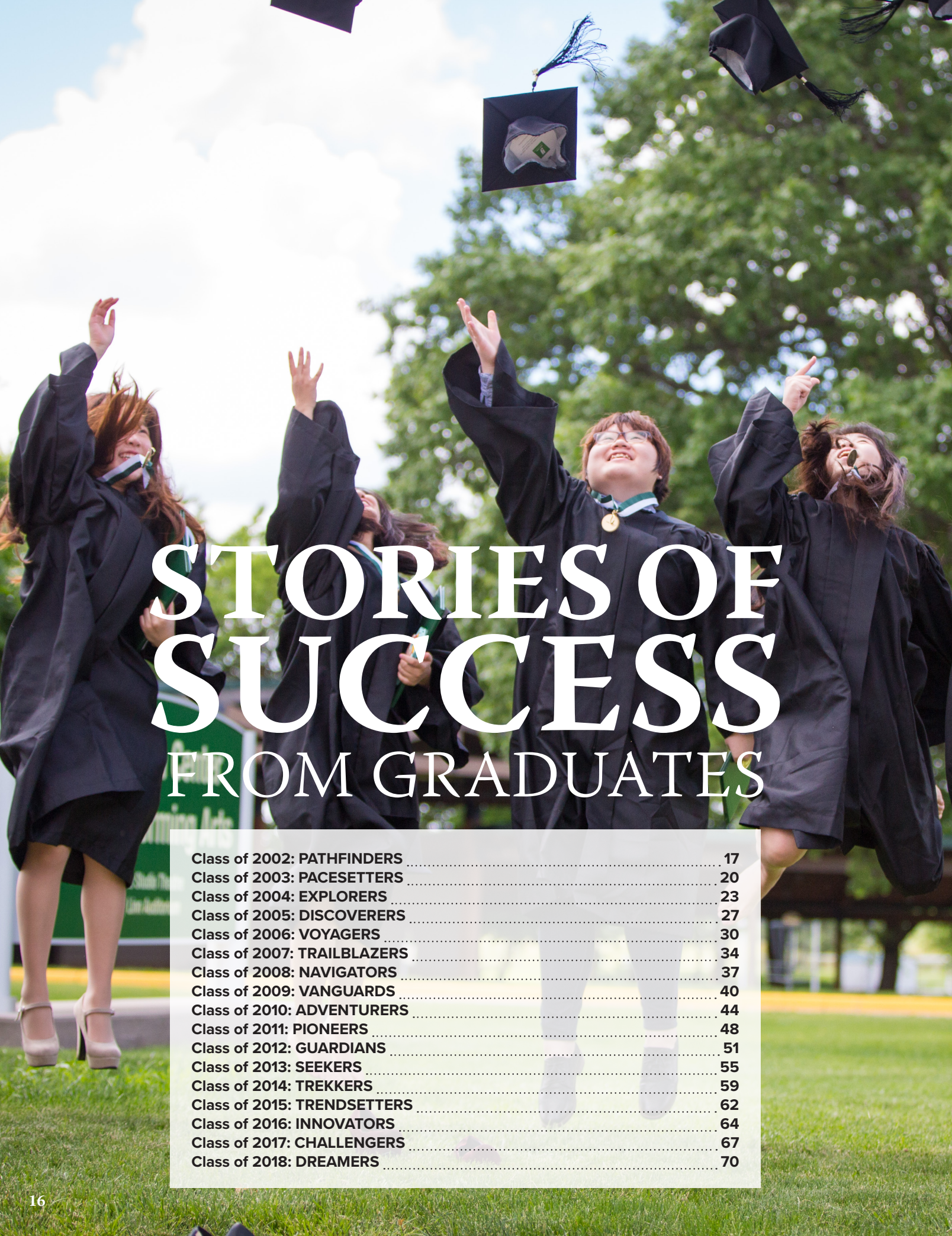
As with many traditional university students on campus, Missouri Academy students were required to purchase a meal plan.

From 2000 through 2012, the meal plans consisted of two types of declining balance (DB) dollars: a campus DB plan that could be used at any on-campus dining facility and an All Access DB plan where a portion could be used for off-campus vendors. Within each meal plan, there were different budgeting levels such as the regular Aladine Plan, the Aladine Light Plan and the Super Aladine – all on declining balances that could be used at the Bearcat Food Court, JW's Grille, Java City, The Runt, Papa Johns, vending machines, on-campus convenient stores and pizza delivery.

From 2013 through 2018, the meal plan changed and students had the option of purchasing the Silver (base plan), Gold, or Platinum plans which were All-Access plans. All-Access meal plans provided flexibility, convenience and unlimited access to the residential dining center in the Student Union called the Bearcat Commons. Instead of paying a la carte or using a meal "swipe" for two or three meals each day, the All-Access meal plans allowed students to swipe and enter the residential dining center whenever they chose. The Bearcat Commons featured a Mediterranean kitchen with hearth-baked pizza and pasta dishes, produce market and deli, an all-American grill, Tex Mex cuisine, fresh bakery and exhibition stations as well as a Mongolian grill.

Both the Gold and Platinum All-Access plans came with Dining Dollars, which could be used at any campus retail location, including Starbucks, Chick-fil-A, Einstein Bros., Zen Asian, Red Mango, Papa John's (including on-campus delivery) and any vending machines across campus, plus Provisions on Demand (P.O.D.) convenience stores.





STORIES OF SUCCESS FROM GRADUATES

CLASS OF 2002: PATHFINDERS

Name	Hometown	University attended immediately after graduating from Missouri Academy
Eric Aasen	Lake Ozark, Mo.	Purdue University
Mary Askren	Edgerton, Mo.	University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign
Timothy Brigham	Lebanon, Mo.	Missouri University of Science & Technology
Janice Bunch	Downing, Mo.	Truman State University
Vincent Carpenter	Lee's Summit, Mo.	New Jersey Institute of Technology
Reid Catt	Lowry City, Mo.	Missouri University of Science & Technology
Zachary Christensen	Ozark, Mo.	Missouri University of Science & Technology
Jesica Colton	Liberty, Mo.	University of Missouri-Kansas City
Justin Dix	Jerome, Mo.	Missouri University of Science & Technology
Jesse Goethe	Harrisonville, Mo.	Missouri State University
Matthew Holmes	Springfield, Mo.	Missouri University of Science & Technology
Ellizabeth House	Moberly, Mo.	Truman State University
Courtney Keller	Brookfield, Mo.	Centenary College of Louisiana
Christopher Lewis	Kansas City, Mo.	Howard University
Matthew Malley	Columbia, Mo.	Unknown
Crystal McClain	Oak Grove, Mo.	Unknown
Michael Mosenfelder	Lake Ozark, Mo.	Unknown
Erin Murphy	Lee's Summit, Mo.	University of Pennsylvania
Moya O'Berry	Galt, Mo.	University of Missouri-Columbia
Meghan Overgaard	Kearney , Mo.	Vassas College
Kyle Shelton	Harrisonville, Mo.	Missouri University of Science & Technology
Alexander Spradling	Cape Girardeau, Mo.	Missouri University of Science & Technology
Holly Stillman	Ozark, Mo.	University of Missouri-Columbia
Brandon Taylor	Nevada, Mo.	University of Texas-Austin
Adam Thomas	Holden, Mo.	University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign
Andrew Thomas	Raymore, Mo.	University of Missouri-Columbia
Natasha Trueblood	Maryville, Mo.	University of Texas-Austin
Angie Truesdale	Smithville, Mo.	University of Missouri-Columbia
Daniel Wheaton	St. Louis, Mo.	Unknown
Katharine Wheeler	Florissant, Mo.	Unknown

ANGELA TRUESDALE – CLASS OF 2002 –

I am an intellectual property attorney at Shook, Hardy & Bacon, LLC. Working at its national headquarters in Kansas City, Missouri, I handle the prosecution of complex patent applications both domestically and internationally as well as patent application appeals before the Patent Trial and Appeals Board of the United States Trademark and Patent Office. My drafting experience covers a range of subject matter, including synthetic protein analogues, telecommunications, computer software and runtime environments, and various mechanical inventions. My practice at Shook, Hardy & Bacon allows me to continually explore new scientific topics and their real-world applications.

I received my Bachelor of Science (cum laude) in biological sciences from the University of Missouri–Columbia in 2005. During my time there, I conducted research supporting the laboratory of Professor Dr. Troy Zars. Under his mentorship, I developed laboratory research skills by exploring how gene expression and regulation impact learning and memory in adult fruit flies. This research led to a competitively funded internship through the Life Sciences Undergraduate Opportunities Program. I was also an active member of the Beta Eta chapter of Alpha Phi Omega, a co-ed service fraternity. Through Alpha Phi Omega, my peers and I provided time, resources and services to residents, non-profit organizations and other causes throughout Columbia and the neighboring area.

My undergraduate research experience led to a postgraduate position as the genomics core technician at the University of Missouri–Kansas City from 2005 to 2009. In addition to managing and providing resources for the sequencing needs of the Divisions of Molecular Biology and Biochemistry and the Division of Cell Biology and Biophysics, my experiments supported the research goals of the laboratory of Professor Dr. Leonard Dobens, focusing on slow border cells and tribbles in the oogenesis of fruit flies. Yet, after a curious incident of the PCR machine breaking in the nighttime, I discovered an interest in patents, leading to my current profession.

I found my way to the intellectual property law program at the Benjamin N. Cardozo School of Law in New York City from 2009 to 2012. My coursework focused on patent law and culminated in being chosen to participate in an intellectual property and information law colloquium course. Additionally, I continued my community service efforts as a member of the Housing Rights Clinic where I advocated for the rights of residents in the public housing projects of Brooklyn. Based on my experience in the Housing Rights Clinic, I was awarded a funded internship from the Cardozo School of Law allowing me to continue my advocacy through the Housing Conservations Coordinators in the Hell's Kitchen neighborhood. Today, I continue to supplement my patent-based practice with pro bono work.

I am married to Patrick Landazuri, a neurologist specializing in the surgical treatment of epilepsy at the University of Kansas Medical Center. We live in Fairway, Kansas, and enjoy traveling together.

NATASHA TRUEBLOOD BRAND – CLASS OF 2002 –

I attended the University of Texas at Austin where I co-oped with United Space Alliance at Johnson Space Center in Houston, Texas, working in a group of space shuttle flight controllers. I had great experiences in Houston, such as being at Johnson Space Center for Return to Flight after the Columbia disaster and watching a spacewalk in Mission Control. I received my Bachelor of Science in Aerospace Engineering in August 2006.

Having the Missouri Academy on my résumé helped set me apart from other students applying for a limited number of positions. My Missouri Academy experience also gave me confidence and set me up for success in my later endeavors. Plus, already having college credits that counted toward my bachelor's degree allowed me to co-op and still graduate in four years.

After obtaining my degree, I moved to Northern Virginia to be a science, weapons and technology analyst for the Federal Government. I married a wonderful man in 2009, and after eight years with the federal government, we decided to drastically change our lives. We left our government jobs in 2014 and moved our growing family back to Maryville. Today I homeschool our children and manage our growing real estate portfolio.

HOLLY STILLMAN – CLASS OF 2002 –

My decision to attend the Missouri Academy was not a difficult one. My high school didn't challenge me, my parents' marriage was falling apart, and I was definitely ready to be more independent and move onto something bigger and better; the Missouri Academy was the perfect next step for me. I became a member of the first incoming class, a group of kids I would get to know very well over the next two years. They became my much-needed support system and my family, and I was finally comfortable just being myself for the first time in my life. I graduated from the Missouri Academy and went on to attend the University of Missouri-Columbia. Transferring in 76 credit hours allowed me to take a wider array of classes before choosing a major and to spend a full year studying abroad in Germany. I graduated from Mizzou in 2006 with two Bachelor of Arts degrees, one in German and one in philosophy. I went straight into a Ph.D. program for philosophy at the University of Florida, Gainesville. Due to budget cuts, UF eliminated their previously-ranked philosophy program a little over a year after I enrolled. That, in combination with concerns about what doors a doctorate would really open, prompted me to exit the program after completing my master's in May 2008.

Unsure about my life after academia, I spent a year teaching English abroad while I figured out my next move. That one year turned into five amazing years teaching and traveling in East Asia, Southeast Asia and Oceania, and meeting my now fiancée. I came back to the states in 2013 and ended up working in venture capital in San Francisco for a couple of years before moving back to some much-needed space in my home state of Missouri. I currently work for the University of Missouri-Columbia where I help secure and negotiate research grant funding for the university.

In the spring of 2017, in response to confirmation that the Missouri Academy would indeed close, an email chain was started among members of our class. It was, ostensibly, about the fate of the funds still remaining in the Pathfinder scholarship fund, set up a couple years earlier and fully funded by members of our class who clearly felt good about the cause. What started as a practical discussion turned into reminiscing and a push to organize a 15-year reunion. That summer, 13 of our graduating class of 30 met in Kansas City, and it was almost like no time was lost. We fell right back to old roles and habits, and it was fun to be reminded how well people get to know you when you live together for two years in high school.

I can't say the Missouri Academy sent me on a path to an Ivy League school or that I'm doing groundbreaking research in some neglected scientific realm, but it shaped me, and hundreds of students like me, in some of our most formative years. It's impossible to sum up what an opportunity like this means to a smart young person in rural Missouri, but I will say that I never wonder whether I made the right decision.

BRANDON THOMAS TAYLOR – CLASS OF 2002 –

I attended the University of Texas at Austin, graduating in 2006 with degrees in electrical engineering and radio, television and film. I then spent two years at the MIT Media Lab working on a master's degree focused on hardware-based interaction techniques. During my time in Boston, I also worked as a manager at Cannytrophic Design, a collaborative workspace and design studio. After graduating from the Media lab, I was recruited to work in the Digital Media Center at Samsung, focusing on cross-device interaction techniques. After three years in Korea, I returned to the states to work on a Ph.D. in human computer interaction at Carnegie Mellon University and am scheduled to defend my research this June. I have settled down in Pittsburgh with my wife, JoAnna, and our first daughter, Curie, who just turned 1.

Academically, the classes at the Missouri Academy that have stuck with me the most are the literature courses I had to take and the media electives I chose to take. At the time, I really didn't like the lit courses (the thought of literary analysis still makes me cringe), but in retrospect they were fantastic. To this day, trips to the bookstore are shaped by the exposure to authors I would not have sought on my own. The media and film classes provided opportunities that didn't exist at my home high school and directly impacted the education and career path I pursued. That's not to say the math and science courses were bad, but I knew before I set foot at the Missouri Academy that math and science would be in my future. It was the exposure to other things that helped me figure out where I was heading.

I remember the early days, when we all moved in but the lounge areas still weren't furnished. We played a ridiculous amount of card games. We'd check out a group study room in the library or reserve the kitchen. My roommate and I became pretty fantastic at Spades. On-the-floor curfew meant it was time to switch to networked computer games, mostly Counterstrike as I recall.

CLASS OF 2003: PACESETTERS

Name	Hometown	University attended immediately after graduating from Missouri Academy
Brittany Beier-Hart	Maysville, Mo.	University of Missouri-Kansas City
Rachel Bradford	St. Joseph, Mo.	Missouri Western State University
Theodore Brigham	Lebanon, Mo.	University of Iowa
Lois Christensen	Webster Groves, Mo.	Missouri Baptist University
Rachel Coombe	Riverside, Mo.	University of Missouri-Kansas City
Stephanie Davis	Cape Girardeau, Mo.	Southeast Missouri State University
Margret DeGuzman	St. Charles, Mo.	University of Missouri-Columbia
Morgan Ditch	Garden City, Mo.	Truman State University
Jonathan Drozdowski	Springfield, Mo.	Missouri State University
Dana Garner	Aurora, Mo.	Truman State University
Sarah Gillespie	Florissant, Mo.	William Penn University
Alysa Gilson	Wright City, Mo.	Valparaiso University
Tracy Hill	Florissant, Mo.	Clemson University
Kendra Hines	Hamilton, Mo.	University of Iowa
Kathleen Isbell	St. Louis, Mo.	Unknown
Benjamin Iwai	Marshall, Mo.	University of Missouri-Kansas City
Mandi Jackson	Hillsboro, Mo.	Unknown
Stephanie Jordan	Cape Girardeau, Mo.	Unknown
Daniel Kling	Kirksville, Mo.	Truman State University
Jerilyn Laskie	St. Charles, Mo.	Boston University
Joshua Lawrence	Peculiar, Mo.	Clemson University
MyChi Le	Kansas City, Mo.	University of Missouri-Columbia
Tien Nguyen	Kansas City, Mo.	University of Missouri Kansas City
Nicholas Parker	Liberty, Mo.	Boston University
Adam Peetz	Imperial, Mo.	Missouri University of Science & Technology
Vladimir Pozdin	Hermann, Mo.	Butler University and Purdue University
Nicholas Robinson	St. Charles, Mo.	Unknown
Stephen Rudolph	Kansas City, Mo.	Arizona State University
Travis Service	Kirbyville, Mo.	Missouri University of Science & Technology
Shahab Shaffiey	Sedalia, Mo.	University of Missouri-Kansas City
Daniel Stufflebean	Kansas City, Mo.	Cornell University
Vladislav Tchatalbachev	St. Louis, Mo.	University of Missouri-Kansas City
Yi-Jou Tsai	Blue Springs, Mo.	University of Missouri-Columbia
Tristan Twitchell	Independence, Mo.	University of Missouri-Columbia
Jennifer Walker	Dora, Mo.	Unknown
Kyle Williams	Joplin, Mo.	Missouri University of Science & Technology
Amelia Willits-Smith	Parkville, Mo.	University of Colorado
Robyn Worsey	Rolla, Mo.	University of Missouri-Columbia

STEPHEN RUDOLPH – CLASS OF 2003 –

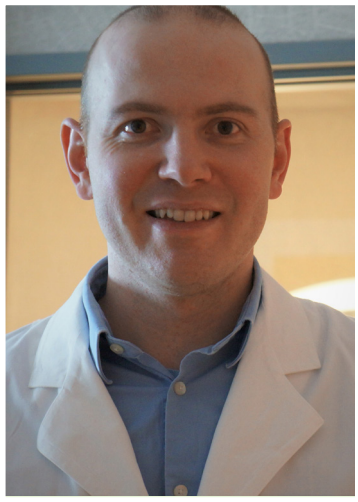
A generous scholarship enticed me to head to Arizona State for my bachelor's degree. I brought with me the Missouri Academy's gifts of time, habits and direction. I had the time to enrich myself well beyond the required coursework for my computer systems engineering degree thanks to starting out with two years worth of college credits from the Missouri Academy. I was able to round myself out and balance my technical coursework with honors, philosophy, Italian, and even dance classes. I had excellent study and attendance habits ingrained in me from the structured Missouri Academy environment, which helped me be successful even during my most difficult semesters. Maybe most importantly, I also had direction. The Missouri Academy solidified my interest in programming and exposed me to fields of study I knew little to nothing about. In particular, I found a passion for philosophy at the Missouri Academy under Dr. Jim Eiswert's instruction. He took the rather clever tactic of making all the lecture material available online, which left the entire class time for the most engaging discussions I had ever been a part of. I was quickly hooked and ended up minoring in philosophy all because of that one class.

In 2007, I began attending Purdue for two years and earned a master's degree in computer engineering. When I came to Purdue, I could immediately tell the level of engineering instruction was a cut above, but it also made me reflect on how fortunate I had been to start with Northwest's faculty. Professors at both ASU and Purdue were clearly, as a rule, researchers first and lecturers second. At Northwest, it had seemed like the reverse, with professors focused on us and our education. I was able to get much more out of each class at Northwest to the point that my course textbooks felt more complementary than primary.

I graduated into the Great Recession in May 2009, but sought shelter in the still-booming defense industry working for General Dynamics. I stayed with General Dynamics across three states, the inevitable downturn in defense, and nearly eight years of engaging work. After setting in Dallas to be closer to my wife's family, I decided I was ready to move on and am now happily employed as a senior consultant at Credera, a consulting firm headquartered not far from my home. I get to continually learn something new and grow as I work with different clients and take on different roles surrounded by amazing coworkers that remind me more than a little of my peers at the Missouri Academy.

Now that I have children of my own, I've started planting the idea in my wife's head that they too may one day want to go to an academy like the Missouri Academy.

DR. VALAD TCHATALBACHEV – CLASS OF 2003 –



I attended the University of Missouri–Kansas City School of Medicine, earning a Bachelor of Science in biology and an M.D. in 2010. During this time, I went to University of Iowa in Iowa City for one year during 2008-09 for a Doris Duke Clinical Research Fellowship. From 2010 to 2015, I completed my diagnostic radiology residency at University of Missouri-Columbia and was chief resident during my final year there. During 2015 and 2016, I completed a Musculoskeletal Imaging Fellowship at University of Missouri-Columbia. I'm now practicing medicine in private practice in St. Louis and in an academic setting at the University of Missouri as an assistant professor. In the future, I hope to expand into the software development field.

The Missouri Academy helped shape me into the person I am today by exposing me to other students with an interest in math and science. The social experience of meeting other like-minded individuals was just as valuable as the academic component.

DR. MyChi LE – CLASS OF 2003 –

The Missouri Academy challenged me both academically and socially at a young age and was the launch of my ambitious career.

I went on to the University of Missouri-Columbia, where I majored in biochemistry and minored in chemistry and graduated Magna Cum Laude, receiving my Bachelor of Science degree in two years. I next began my medical school education at the University of Kansas School of Medicine.

I finished my residency in integrative plastic surgery at the University of Missouri-Columbia in 2015, and I am now a board-certified plastic surgeon practicing in Saint Joseph, Missouri. I am passionate about my work and continue to not only provide the best possible care to my patients but to also learn from them and strive to become a better physician every day.

DR. KIM TIEN NGUYEN – CLASS OF 2003 –

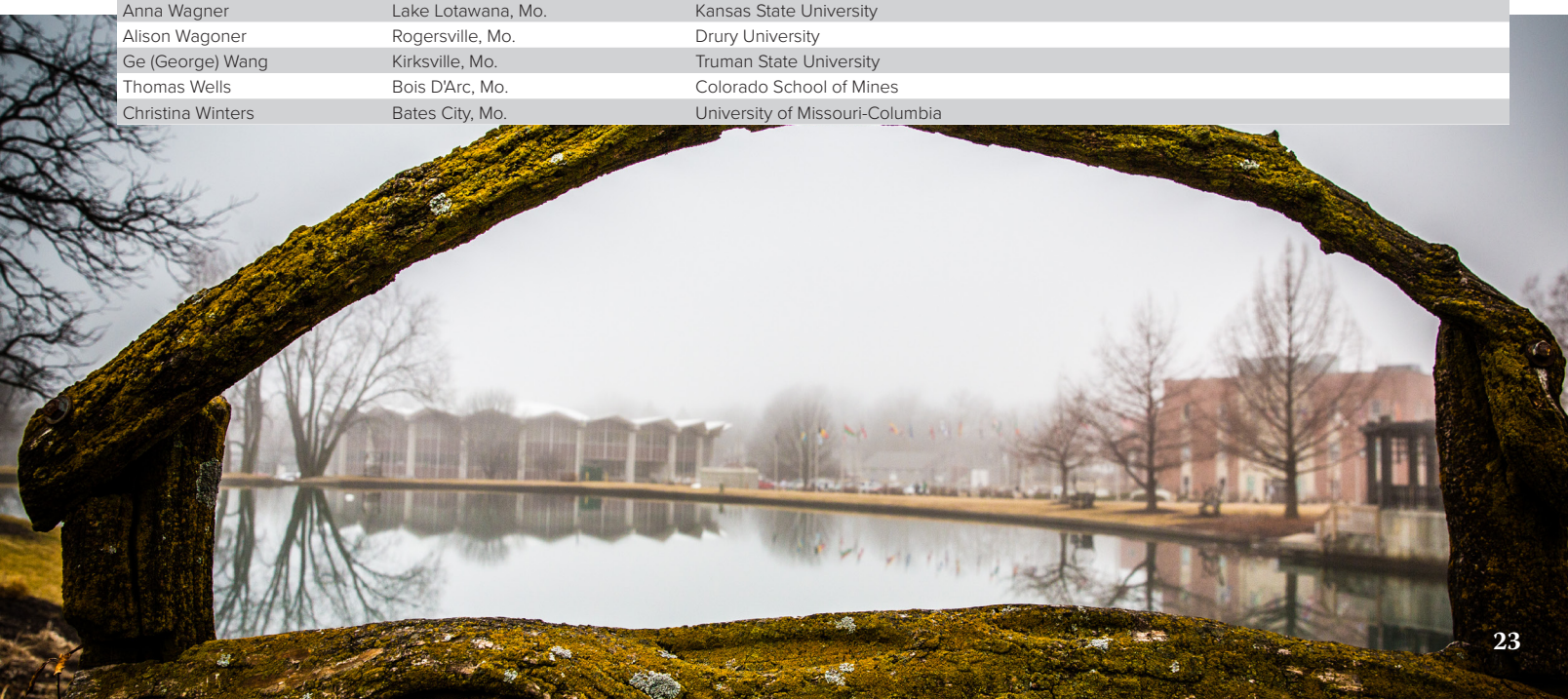
I immigrated from Buon Ma Thuot, Vietnam to Kansas City, Missouri, with my parents and five siblings in 1991. I was influenced by my grandfather, the owner of my village's apothecary, and thus went on to earn my Doctorate of Pharmacy from the University of Missouri-Kansas City School of Pharmacy in 2008.

I continued practicing pharmacy at Walgreens as a registered pharmacist in Missouri and Kansas. During my time as the pharmacy manager and pharmacist-in-charge at Walgreens, I received American Pharmacists Association certifications in immunization and compounding to expand these services to the community. I was dedicated to providing patients with quality care and enjoyed personal one-on-one interactions with patients offering consultations and education to improve medication adherence and patient care. After a decade of service to the community, I wanted to focus on my family. Today, I am committed to my husband, one-year-old son, and advancing the care of patients in assisted living facilities and nursing homes working with Rockhill Long-Term Care Pharmacy.

I am eternally grateful to God, my parents, and the individuals within the Missouri Academy community for creating the foundation of integrity and quality. I believe that excellence is achieved through our daily habits, but only when our habits have been established by a strong foundation are we able to move forward and influence those around us and have a positive reinforcement.

CLASS OF 2004: EXPLORERS

Name	Hometown	University attended immediately after graduating from Missouri Academy
Emily J Bahram-ahi	St. Charles, Mo.	Missouri University of Science & Technology
Nathan Bell	Jackson, Mo.	Unknown
Alyssa Berwick	DeSoto, Mo.	Boston University
Ralph Blount	Kansas City, Mo.	Arizona State University
Michael Blum	DeSoto, Mo.	University of California-Berkeley
Anthony Brittingham	Macon, Mo.	Missouri University of Science & Technology
Lauren Davis	Beaufort, Mo.	University of Missouri-Columbia
Elisha Dawson	Butler, Mo.	Missouri University of Science & Technology
Peter Dempsey	Liberty, Mo.	University of Missouri-Columbia
Laura Dotson	St. Peters, Mo.	University of Missouri-Columbia
William Dotson	St. Peters, Mo.	Cardinal Glennon Seminary
Rose Driber	St. James, Mo.	Gilford College
Sasha Eckstein	Edgerton, Mo.	College of William and Mary
Tiffany Elking	Ellisville, Mo.	Depaul University
Erica Fitzgerald	Bethany, Mo.	Truman State University
Erica Glenn	St. Louis, Mo.	University of North Carolina
Jack Gorham	Richmond, Mo.	University of Missouri-Columbia
Peter Graf	Perryville, Mo.	University of Missouri-Columbia
Jon Hervas	Jackson, Mo.	Missouri University of Science & Technology
Michael Hoffman	Russellville, Mo.	Missouri University of Science & Technology
Brittany Hotmer	St. Charles, Mo.	Truman State University
Erin Huffman	Fayette, Mo.	Unknown
Cassandra Hunt	St. Peters, Mo.	Mass. Institute of Technology
Nathan Jentsch	Tebbetts, Mo.	Rochester Institute of Technology
Rachel Kraft	Gladstone, Mo.	University of Oklahoma
Andrew Luttrell	St. Louis, Mo.	Missouri University of Science & Technology
Jedidiah Mayes	Dearborn, Mo.	University of Kansas
Ami Mehta	Manchester, Mo.	Washington University
Megha Mehta	Manchester, Mo.	University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign
Jessica Newman	St. Louis, Mo.	Missouri University of Science & Technology
Nicholas Newport	Blue Springs, Mo.	University of Missouri-Columbia
Cory Pate	Kansas City, Mo.	Rose Hulman Institute of Tech
Christine Pergande	Mountain Grove, Mo.	Missouri University of Science & Technology
Maria Posada	Battlefield, Mo.	University of Missouri-Kansas City
Allen Reger	Newtown, Mo.	Florida Institute of Technology
Madison Rosas	St. Charles, Mo.	New College of Flordia
Isaac Rounds	Kansas City, Mo.	University of Missouri-Columbia
Maxie Schmidt	Wildwood, Mo.	University of Illinois
Jessica Shaffer	St. James, Mo.	Missouri University of Science & Technology
Bryan Sitzmann	Kansas City, Mo.	Truman State University
CasSandra Stretch	Breckenridge, Mo.	Evangel University
Michael Troxel	Hillsboro, Mo.	University of Oklahoma
Charles Tullock	Gerald, Mo.	Missouri University of Science & Technology
Steven Underwood	Seymour, Mo.	Missouri University of Science & Technology
Sashank Veligati	St. Joseph, Mo.	Duke University
Anna Wagner	Lake Lotawana, Mo.	Kansas State University
Alison Wagoner	Rogersville, Mo.	Drury University
Ge (George) Wang	Kirksville, Mo.	Truman State University
Thomas Wells	Bois D'Arc, Mo.	Colorado School of Mines
Christina Winters	Bates City, Mo.	University of Missouri-Columbia



DR. MICHAEL TROXEL – CLASS OF 2004 –

I grew up near a small town of 3,000 people in rural Missouri, where it was difficult to even imagine the life I now lead. I have since graduated - the first of my family I know to finish college - with bachelor's degrees in astrophysics and mathematics from the University of Oklahoma in 2008, and a Ph.D. in physics from the University of Texas at Dallas in 2014. I am a career academic researcher, working as a research associate at the Jodrell Bank Centre for Astrophysics at the University of Manchester and currently as a fellow at the Center for Cosmology and AstroParticle Physics at The Ohio State University. I have published over 55 academic articles, including a 100-plus page invited review article for Physics Reports on the intrinsic alignment of galaxies and impacts on weak gravitational lensing and my 300-plus page Ph.D. dissertation.

In my professional life, I am the cosmology analysis coordinator in the largest ongoing weak lensing science collaboration - the Dark Energy Survey (DES) - with nearly 500 participants from around the world. I previously led the weak lensing working group in DES. We are producing world-leading constraints on the properties of two of the biggest mysteries in all of science - the nature of Dark Matter and Dark Energy, which together make up 95 percent of the Universe. I am also part of groups working to define and build science analyses using the Large Synoptic Survey Telescope and Wide-Field InfraRed Survey Telescope, two leading cosmology missions from the ground and space, respectively, in the

NICHOLAS NEWPORT – CLASS OF 2004 –

I went on to the University of Missouri-Columbia where, in 2007, I graduated with a chemical engineering degree. I now have more than 10 years of professional experience, with more than eight years in the renewable energy and energy efficiency field. I started my career studying and developing novel nano-energetics. After two years, I took a position at the Missouri Division of Energy, managing renewable energy programs with a focus on landfill gas capture and anaerobic digesters. Having developed an interest in the environmental impacts of garbage and animal waste during college chemodynamics classes, I assisted in the development of three landfill gas capture projects and two anaerobic digesters at concentrated animal feeding operations. At the Division of Energy I began assuming more responsibilities and branched out of renewable energy and into energy efficiency building science. I began supporting the Energy Loan Program project design reviews on schools and municipal buildings, managed the Missouri Home Energy Auditor Certification Program, expanded benchmarking of state-owned buildings and accelerated energy efficient building operator training.

In 2012, I met my wife, Hope. Soon after we moved to Connecticut, where I managed energy efficiency investment upgrades at multifamily properties throughout New England for New Ecology Inc. Working on a variety of project scales from five-unit buildings undergoing weatherization to 200-plus unit high-rise gut rehabilitation and 20-plus building sprawling developments, I managed projects and project teams from cradle to grave, starting from opportunity assessments and historical energy analysis and moving through investment grade audits, financing, design, construction, commissioning and ultimately to measurement and verification.

In 2016, with the birth of our first child, Cormac, Hope and I moved to Kansas City to be closer to family. I work for ICF, managing KCP&L's Income-Eligible Multi-Family program where I have reduced utility bills through energy efficiency for more than 50,000 families in Missouri.

In my free time, I enjoy staying active and being outdoors. I continue to play Ultimate Frisbee 13 years after joining the University of Missouri team. I ran my first marathon with Hope in 2017, really miss hiking in New England, and help out as a ranch hand at my in-laws.

2020s. These projects have a planned combined cost of about $4 billion.

I am pursuing a tenure-track university faculty position, which has provided an opportunity for reflection on the things that contribute to student success and, in particular, the cause and effect of my own successes. I had the opportunity to share some of this with the Missouri Academy Class of 2016 as their commencement speaker and more recently when describing my teaching philosophy to prospective universities. I have found that it is impossible to speak of my success and philosophy without referencing the Missouri Academy.

The Missouri Academy challenged all of us and made us better learners, better thinkers, and better prepared for success. I cannot think of a more precious and needed thing in our current society than people who are trained to think and evaluate their world critically. This is not the real reason the Missouri Academy is important, though. My time at the Missouri Academy made me a better person - my confidence and the scope of my worldview grew in ways that would never have happened had I not attended the Missouri Academy. I learned to work with other people who were equally invested in pursuing success and challenging themselves and their world to their limits. We were vested in a philosophy of pursuing life with thoughtful integrity and an aim for quality in what we did (coined 'IQ'), which has been the basis and the means for much of my professional success. My colleagues do not know about "IQ," but I have found that they recognize its impact in my work and leadership, and this fire has spread throughout my professional community to make us a better and more successful collaboration. We all have places and people like the Missouri Academy and its staff and students to thank for that.

FR. WILLIAM DOTSON – CLASS OF 2004 –

I attended Kenrick-Glennon seminary, where I earned a Bachelor of Arts in philosophy, a Master of Arts in theology, and a Master of Divinity. I was ordained a Catholic priest in May 2012. Since July 2017 I am the parochial administrator, an ecclesiastical term that is the same as "pastor," of St. Charles Borromeo Parish in St. Charles, Missouri. It is the third parish I have been assigned to, but it is the first time I am "in charge." The parish has about 2,000 families registered, a school with more than 300 kids, and about one-fourth of the parish is Hispanic, so it is not a small assignment. It has been overwhelming at times, but it has also been a blessed experience.

In many ways, my path after the Missouri Academy is unusual. I haven't taken a single science, mathematics or computing course since graduating from the Missouri Academy. However, I am convinced that, without the Missouri Academy, I may never have ended up where I am today. First, on a practical level, it was while attending the Missouri Academy that I first ever saw a seminary or met a seminarian, thanks to the fact that Maryville is only 10 miles from Conception seminary. Even more than that, it was the people at the Missouri Academy, both my fellow students and the staff that helped me find my vocation. At the Missouri Academy, I was encouraged to ask, "What am I going to do with my life?" and "How am I going to make a difference in the world?" It was a community of people who dreamed big and who understood passion and commitment. It was people who weren't content with just doing the same thing that everyone else does. It was in this environment that I was able to discern and respond to the call to do something beyond the ordinary with my life. The Missouri Academy also gave me the ability to know so many diverse people. Many of my classmates in the seminary had gone to private Catholic schools for their entire education. Some of them had barely met someone who wasn't just like them. For me, the Missouri Academy was an amazing community of so many different people, from so many diverse backgrounds and perspectives, who were all living together. When I tell people where I went to high school, they often assume that, in a math and science school, the decision to be a priest would be met with scorn. They are surprised when I tell them that everyone at the Missouri Academy was supportive of me. But that was the beauty of the Missouri Academy. In addition to allowing me to find my vocation, it helped me as a priest as I interact with so many different people.

I am so thankful for my time at the Missouri Academy, for the people I met and the experiences I had. And if any of you find yourself in St. Charles on a Sunday morning and are looking for a church, you know where to find me – unless the Archbishop reassigns me.

THOMAS WELLS – CLASS OF 2004 –

I went on to attend the Colorado School of Mines in Golden, Colorado. Due in part to the credits that I received at the Missouri Academy, I completed my Bachelor of Science degree in engineering physics in three years (in May 2007) and my Master of Science degree in electrical engineering in one year in May 2008. Between earning those degrees, I spent a summer near Dresden, Germany, studying sustainable energy supply and working with a local PV installation company.

Immediately after graduating from CSM, I went to Alaska with several friends to climb Mt. McKinley (Denali; 20,320 feet). Our self-guided, 30-day expedition was unsuccessful in the sense that we did not summit, but it was an enjoyable adventure. I then began work as an engineer for BP Alaska, often working a two-week on/off rotational schedule in the Prudhoe Bay oil field that lies on the north coast of Alaska.

I stayed with BP for a little over three years, but ultimately decided I wanted to take my career in a different direction. I spent most of 2012 traveling - covering more than 50,000 miles, largely by train and bus - which included studying Spanish in Guatemala, volunteering with various organizations, reconnecting with friends in distant places and ultimately visiting 22 different countries.

After my travels, I found myself in Boulder, Colorado, a few miles north of where I went to school in Golden. It took some time to find a job I wanted, so I spent my first year integrating with the community by volunteering in the schools, with the city, and with flood recovery efforts in response to the September 2013 floods.

Early in 2014 I took a position with the energy practice of Navigant Consulting Inc. I am now part of a management consulting team that helps electric utilities evaluate and improve their energy efficiency programs. We also perform modeling, data analysis and cost benefit studies related to smart grid, demand response, and the "energy cloud." The data science work I do is interesting, challenging, impactful and allows me to live in Boulder where I have access to amazing rock climbing, backpacking and skiing. I also recently bought a condo.

In addition to leisure activities, I spend significant time each month giving back to my community. I am a board member for two nonprofit organizations and one city commission – a combined total of eight years of board service. Volunteering in this way is both fulfilling for me and meaningful for the organizations.

The Missouri Academy was a turning point in my life. No one can say what things would have been like if I had stayed at my sending high school, but I do know that the support and community I found at the Missouri Academy opened my eyes and opened many doors. Neither of my parents went to college, and I lived in a community plagued with addiction. By most external measures, I'm relatively successful in life, but when friends learn how far I've really come, they always say something like, "It's amazing you turned out the way you did." I write this with humility and as a sincere expression of gratitude for those who made the Missouri Academy possible – in a very real way, I turned out the way I did because of the Missouri Academy.

CLASS OF 2005: DISCOVERERS

Name	Hometown	University attended immediately after graduating from Missouri Academy
Ramandeep Babbra	O'Fallon, Mo.	University of Missouri-Kansas City
Aaron Baker	Camdenton, Mo.	Northwest Missouri State University
Tara Banaszek	Imperial, Mo.	Missouri University of Science & Technology
Bethany Bartholomaus	Springfield, Mo.	Missouri University of Science & Technology
Joshua Blankenship	Platte City, Mo.	Missouri University of Science & Technology
Daniel Brigham	Lebanon, Mo.	Northwest Missouri State University
Amanda Carroll	Bosworth, Mo.	Truman State University
Meagan Carrow	Lee's Summit, Mo.	University of Missouri-Columbia
Thomas Cochell	Canton, Mo.	Colorado School of Mines
Jason Daming	St. Charles, Mo.	Missouri University of Science & Technology
Whitni DeGrange	Florissant, Mo.	University of Missouri-Columbia
Lily Ehlebracht	Gladstone, Mo.	University of California-Berkeley
Aadhar Garg	Springfield, Mo.	Georgia Institute of Technology
Amber Halavats	Waynesville, Mo.	Saint Louis University
Mark Herrera	Kansas City, Mo.	Missouri University of Science & Technology
Ruth Herrin	Springfield, Mo.	Marshall University
Jessica Hoffman	Russellville, Mo.	University of Missouri-Columbia
Michael Jelavich	Maryville, Mo.	University of Missouri-Kansas City
Christopher Johnson	Maryland Heights, Mo.	University of Tulsa
Catherine Jones	Independence, Mo.	University of Missouri-Columbia
Kacy Krehbiel	Kansas City, Mo.	University of Oklahoma
Justin Lynn	Hopkins, Mo.	Northwest Missouri State University
Irene Malan	Marshall, Mo.	University of Missouri-Columbia
Matthew Marsh	Liberty, Mo.	Missouri University of Science & Technology
Jacqueline Powers	Excelsior Springs, Mo.	University of Missouri-Columbia
Summer Raines	Marble Hill, Mo.	University of Chicago
Sharon Rhodes	Independence, Mo.	University of California-Berkeley
Amanda Rode	Leeton, Mo.	Northwest Missouri State University
Angela Rudolph	Kansas City, Mo.	Missouri University of Science & Technology
Elena Smith-Martinez	Springfield, Mo.	University of Alabama
Andrew Spencer	St. Peters, Mo.	Rose Hulman Institute of Technology
Brian Troutwine	Bertrand, Mo.	University of Chicago
Mary Wack	St. Louis, Mo.	University of Missouri-Saint Louis
Bradley Williamson	Blue Springs, Mo.	University of Missouri-Kansas City

JASON DAMING – CLASS OF 2005 –

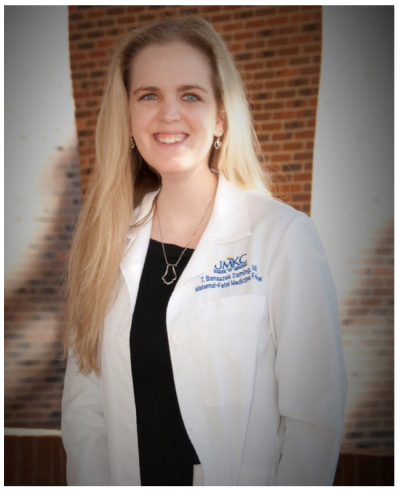
I attended Missouri University of Science and Technology and graduated with a degree in computer engineering in 2008. I went to work doing robotics, automation and controls for various companies, including National Instruments, Boeing, Lockheed Martin, Monsanto, Caterpillar, Winchester, Shell and Intralox. In the process, I have lived in Austin, St. Louis, New Orleans and now Kansas City. I married my Missouri Academy sweetheart, Tara Banaszek, in May 2016. We had our first child, Gwendolyn, in February 2018.

I cannot imagine all of the ways my life would be different without the Missouri Academy. I never would have met so many like-minded peers that I still talk with today. We had the privilege of having our wedding officiated by fellow alumus Mark Herrera, and I got the chance to be the best man in his wedding. I don't think there is any way that traditional high school could ever have replicated the bonds that I grew at the Missouri Academy and continue to shape my life today. It jumpstarted my education by helping me improve my study habits and prepare me for college and beyond.

I have mentored FIRST robotics for the past 10 years and have had the privilege of working with the Missouri Academy team the last two years. Despite numerous challenges the team always persevered due to the hard work and brilliant ideas of the Missouri Academy students. Comparing students of other high school programs I work with to the Missouri Academy students, it is neat to see the difference in maturity and organization. The amount of self-motivated drive and focus is unparalleled at that age, and I think that is due, in large part, to the culture of excellence the Missouri Academy creates.

DR. TARA BANASZEK DAMING – CLASS OF 2005 –

The Missouri Academy was the best decision I made in my teen years. Instead of learning the same things from the previous years I leapfrogged ahead, and obtained 81 college credits prior to graduation. I graduated in 2005 with friends that stayed with me to this day. I met my husband, Jason Daming, there; our officiant was one of our best friends from the Missouri Academy, Mark Herrera; and some of those in our wedding were all from friendships that started in the Missouri Academy – Lily Ehlebracht, Angela Rudolph and Michael Jelavich. My younger sister, Ashley Banaszek, also attended the Missouri Academy. The Missouri Academy was an experience that shaped me academically and as a person. Becoming an independent person at the age of 16 and organizing and planning my life helped me mature and gave me confidence moving forward.



I went on to attend the Missouri University of Science and Technology and majored in biological sciences with minors in cognitive neuroscience and chemistry, and graduated after two years in 2007. I then did research at Washington University School of Medicine in the biochemistry and biophysics department and went on to medical school at Baylor College of Medicine in Houston from 2008 to 2012. I did my residency in obstetrics and gynecology at Tulane University in New Orleans from 2012 to 2016 and got married in my final year of residency. We decided to return closer to home to complete my training, and currently I am a maternal fetal medicine fellow in perinatology at the University of Missouri- Kansas City. I take care of high-risk pregnancies, both due to maternal complications as well as fetal anomalies, and my research interests include maternal congenital heart disease and obesity. I plan on continuing to practice medicine in an academic hospital, so I can continue to do research and teach.

I live in Kansas City with Jason and our newest addition, Gwendolyn. I am grateful for the opportunities the Missouri Academy gave me.

AMBER HALAVATS RAASCH – CLASS OF 2005 –

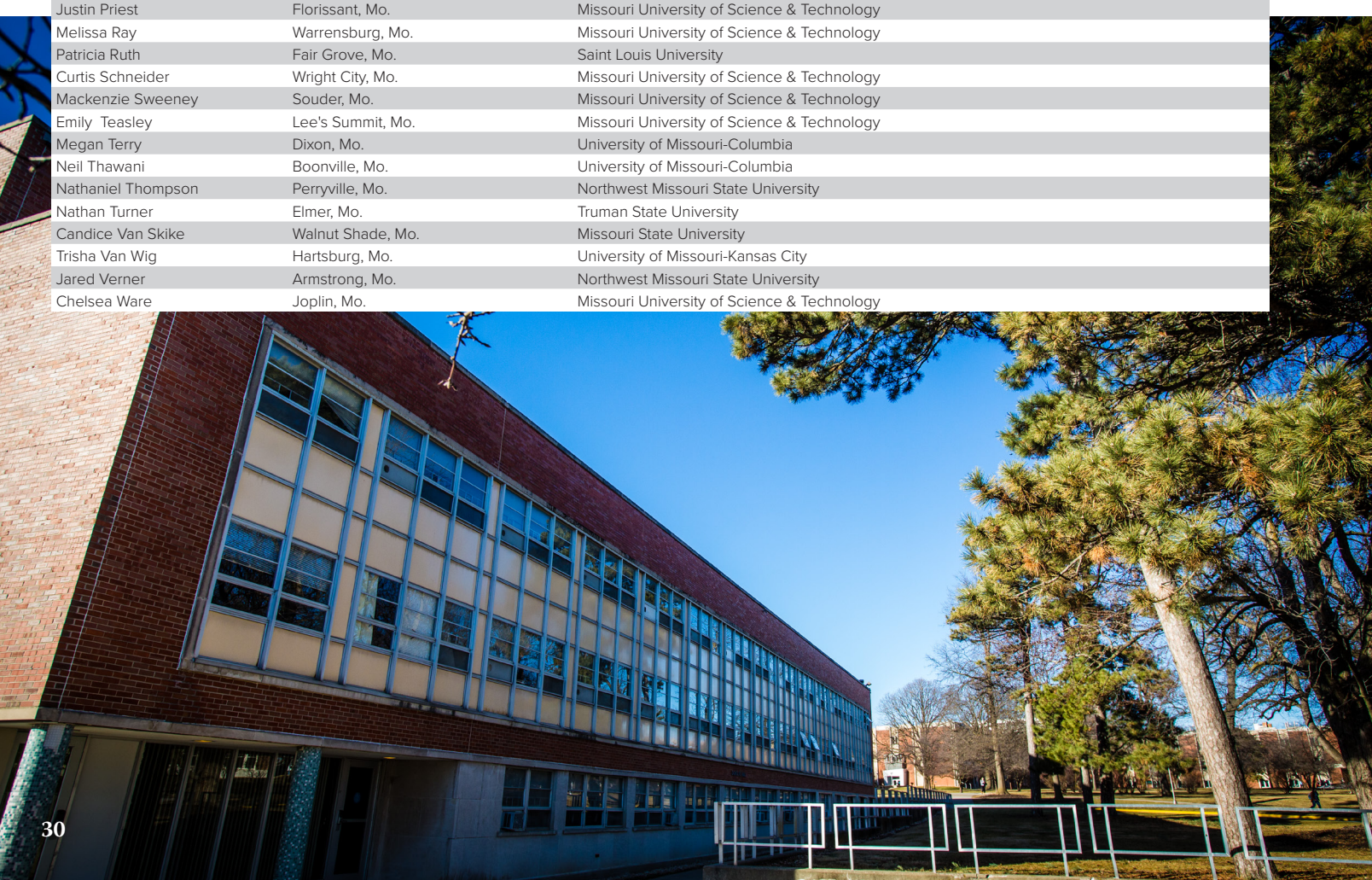
I attended St. Louis University for four years, walking on campus and qualifying as a senior. I completed a Bachelor of Science degree in clinical laboratory science as well as a Forensic Science Certificate in 2009. I began working at the Missouri Baptist Medical Center laboratory and was there for seven years, progressively gaining more responsibility. I grew restless, so I completed a Master of Healthcare Administration degree in 2015. A few months later, I accepted a position as laboratory manager and director at Shriners Hospitals for Children in St. Louis where I made vast improvements to the work environment and, while doing so, achieved my Yellow Belt for LEAN/Six Sigma, a performance improvement certification. Recently, I began working at ROi, a revolutionary group purchasing organization started by Mercy Hospital, as a category manager for the Laboratory Division. I negotiate contracts worth millions of dollars and love every minute of it.

The Missouri Academy was instrumental in setting me on my career path. It gave me a strong foundation from which I could stand on my own two feet. I learned independence and began to grow the strength of my character. I was challenged at every turn and became a better, more well-rounded person as a result. It did not transform me into who I am today, but it gave me a decade's worth of a head start. I credit my time at the Missouri Academy for my ambition and perseverance. It was there that I learned of the truly limitless nature of my potential without pressuring me into something I did not want to be. It helped me grow up, which I sorely needed, and did so in a safe setting. It provided just the right amount of freedom without too much danger. I was pushed past my breaking point and made stronger as a result. The Missouri Academy was a forge for the best the next generation had to offer.

As for my future, I have contemplated returning to school for a doctorate degree and plan to continue to climb the proverbial corporate ladder. Although I am quite delighted with my new position, I do tend to grow bored quickly. I aim to end my career somewhere in a C-Suite position or close to it. I strive to be in a position where I go home each evening knowing I made my work environment better than when I walked in that morning. I enjoy spending time with my husband and our son. I love watching him grow and explore the world around him.

CLASS OF 2006: VOYAGERS

Name	Hometown	University attended immediately after graduating from Missouri Academy
Adrienne Allain	Florence, Mo.	University of Missouri-Kansas City
Jay Augustin	Weldon Springs, Mo.	Missouri University of Science & Technology
Ashley Banaszek	Imperial, Mo.	Missouri University of Science & Technology
Mark Baumgartner	Kansas City, Mo.	Missouri University of Science & Technology
Sabrina Bennett	Trenton, Mo.	University of Missouri-Columbia
Alexander Blevins	Weatherby Lake, Mo.	University of Missouri-Columbia
Christopher Brett	Springfield, Mo.	University of Missouri-Kansas City
Kristi Cassaday	Cedar Hill, Mo.	University of Missouri-Columbia
Frank Closser	Blue Springs, Mo.	Missouri University of Science & Technology
Mason Crawford	Osceola, Mo.	Westminster College
Valerie Davis	Belton, Mo.	University of Missouri-Kansas City
Carol Faulhaber	Sedalia, Mo.	Iowa State University
Allyson Finch	St. Robert, Mo.	Missouri University of Science & Technology
Allie Finney	Smithville, Mo.	University of Wisconsin-Madison
Katherine Fourman	Grain Valley, Mo.	University of Missouri-Columbia
David Gorham	Richmond, Mo.	Missouri University of Science & Technology
Ryan Grass	Florissant, Mo.	University of Kansas
Emi Griess	Nevada, Mo.	Truman State University
Daniel Hecox	Adrian, Mo.	Evergreen State College
Emily Heidbreder	O'Fallon, Mo.	Northwest Missouri State University
Chad Henderson	Marshfield, Mo.	Missouri University of Science & Technology
Dale Hopper	St. Charles, Mo.	University of Missouri-Columbia
Jamie Huffman	Kansas City, Mo.	Florida Institute of Technology
Rizwana Islam	Maryville, Mo.	Saint Louis School of Pharmacy
Emily Jones	Independence, Mo.	University of Missouri-Columbia
Helen Kim	Ava, Mo.	Rose-Hulman Institute of Technology
Ashley Lang	Taneyville, Mo.	Unknown
Danielle Marler	Hillsboro, Mo.	Lake Forest College
Jonathan McNamara	St. Charles, Mo.	Missouri University of Science & Technology
Michael Nolan	St. Charles, Mo.	Georgia Institute of Technology
Kristin Penn	Nevada, Mo.	University of Missouri-Columbia
Sara Pennepacker	Ava, Mo.	Brigham Young University
Jessica Platt	Hazelwood, Mo.	Knox College
Justin Priest	Florissant, Mo.	Missouri University of Science & Technology
Melissa Ray	Warrensburg, Mo.	Missouri University of Science & Technology
Patricia Ruth	Fair Grove, Mo.	Saint Louis University
Curtis Schneider	Wright City, Mo.	Missouri University of Science & Technology
Mackenzie Sweeney	Souder, Mo.	Missouri University of Science & Technology
Emily Teasley	Lee's Summit, Mo.	Missouri University of Science & Technology
Megan Terry	Dixon, Mo.	University of Missouri-Columbia
Neil Thawani	Boonville, Mo.	University of Missouri-Columbia
Nathaniel Thompson	Perryville, Mo.	Northwest Missouri State University
Nathan Turner	Elmer, Mo.	Truman State University
Candice Van Skike	Walnut Shade, Mo.	Missouri State University
Trisha Van Wig	Hartsburg, Mo.	University of Missouri-Kansas City
Jared Verner	Armstrong, Mo.	Northwest Missouri State University
Chelsea Ware	Joplin, Mo.	Missouri University of Science & Technology



JAMIE HUFFMAN – CLASS OF 2006 –

I received a Bachelor of Science in aerospace engineering from Florida Institute of Technology in 2009 and it only took me three years to complete an engineering degree that typically takes five years; I generally took between 13 and 15 credits hours in order to achieve this feat. In comparison to what I did at the Missouri Academy, this was a walk in the park, but the Missouri Academy set me up incredibly well for success.

After my undergraduate degree, I went to Georgia Institute of Technology and completed a master's degree in mechanical engineering in 2011. After school, I started working at SpaceX and currently am the manager of vehicle operations and software automation. Since joining SpaceX, I have sat on console and given a "GO" for numerous missions. Additionally, I've participated in satellite deliveries, cargo missions to the International Space Station and landed multiple rockets. I've also designed and built some of the coolest and most powerful rockets to date. I'm looking forward to many more adventures in the future. My life would be different if not for the Missouri Academy and I am deeply thankful.

NEIL THAWANI – CLASS OF 2006 –

I started my college career at the University of Missouri-Columbia. My initial research there arose from the funding opportunity previously provided by the Missouri Academy to study "the relationship between race and delinquency and the factors that influence disproportionate minority contact in Missouri" with Dr. Anne Dannerbeck within the Department of Social Work.

During my college career, I worked in campus research labs in the areas of health psychology and electrical engineering. After remaining undecided for two years, I earned degrees in psychology and electrical engineering with an emphasis in computational neuroscience. My senior honors thesis was called "Experiments in the MU Fear Chamber." During the latter half of my college career, I worked as a talent management data analyst, consultant, trainer and coach for AIESEC, a global non-profit that facilitates work-abroad exchange for university students. After graduating from Mizzou, I spent the summer in St. Louis, working on a startup with some friends while contracting with a web and mobile development agency called Code Painters.

At the end of the summer, I applied for full-time jobs in Missouri and started working at DST Systems, a financial services firm in downtown Kansas City. After working at DST for about a year and a half as a test engineer, I started as a web developer at Infegy, a marketing research and analytics firm also located in Kansas City. I maintained a steady interest in social justice, startup culture, and cognitive science, and I am applying the sum of my experiences to build better platforms for cultivating analytical and emotional intelligence.

ASHLEY BANASZEK – CLASS OF 2006 –

I enrolled at the Missouri University of Science and Technology where I earned the Chancellor's Scholarship – the highest academic scholarship offered by the university. The well-rounded head start of the Missouri Academy's curriculum allowed me the time to change my mind in college. I was fortunate to experiment with three majors before finding something that truly compelled me. After graduating from Missouri S&T with bachelor's degrees in both information science and business management in 2010, I pursued a master's degree in information science, which I completed in 2011.

That academic success is largely due to the Missouri Academy. It taught me how to study, how to struggle, and how to solve problems. I finished three degrees in five years by dual-enrolling in both undergrad and grad school my senior year of college. The credits I gained at the Missouri Academy could have let me graduate S&T early, but instead I got to apply that four-year scholarship to include a year of graduate study. I graduated with minimal academic debt, which helped me be financially stable right out of school.

I also can thank the Missouri Academy for my bold attitude. At the Missouri Academy, I was in about a dozen clubs and was a leader in at least half of them. That experience helped me gain the confidence that carried me through college and into the corporate world. At Missouri S&T,

JESSICA PLATT – CLASS OF 2006 –

I attended Knox College and received a Bachelor of Arts in sociology of education in 2008.

In April 2008, I had an arterial-venous malformation (AVM) that started to rupture in my brain. The first hospital I was taken to deemed my AVM inoperable and put a shunt in my head to drain the excess fluid from my brain. I spent two weeks in Peoria, Illinois, before they sent me home. I went home and had another seizure and was taken to St. Louis University Hospital where their neurosurgeon thought he could get to it. It took three surgeries and, after the second one, I lost the ability to speak. I was hospitalized in intensive care for five weeks, a rehabilitation center for two weeks, and outpatient speech and occupational therapies for 10 weeks. I could understand everything that was said to me, I just couldn't reliably say what I wanted to due to expressive aphasia. I never lost faith that I would regain the ability to talk. After all, I was a student at the Missouri Academy; I had entered college two years early, so I knew I could deal with a slight setback caused by my brain trying to explode, right? It was a long road to recovery, taking about six months before I could reliably talk. Reliably reading was even harder and still gives me trouble.

Despite having to recover from my AVM, I have worked for several agencies since 2008. Currently, I am working for St. Louis Arc, a worldwide organization that serves people who have developmental disabilities. I am an employment specialist, which means I work with individuals who want competitive employment. Every day, I get to work on an amazing team and provide support to people who, just like me, have to overcome major setbacks in life.

Outside of work, I have participated in several 5Ks, three half-marathons and three obstacle courses. My Great Pyrenees, Murphy, is a TOUCH Therapy dog for support dogs. He visits a local school and one of the Arc's residential locations each month – he's actually the reason I got an interview with the Arc. Of course, I still write and I am excited that Outskirts Press is publishing the story I was working on while I was a student at the Missouri Academy. "Flair" will be available in hardcover, paperback and electronic copy by the end of 2018.

I had a leadership position in Kappa Delta sorority and was president of Spectrum, S&T's LGBTA alliance. I remember being threatened by students and staff upset about the LGBTA equality. I can admit sometimes I was scared, but I never lost my nerve.

I've been climbing the ranks in the user experience (UX) team at Union Pacific Railroad and am a senior user experience specialist, creating user interfaces for mobile and web applications that support employees and customers. I work all over the company and travel throughout the country, researching workflow and design problems and testing solutions. The variety keeps me engaged and makes sure my passion for UX doesn't wane.

Since joining Union Pacific in 2011, I have gained a bit of notoriety as a pioneering, vocal proponent of positive change. I credit this again to a spark started by the Missouri Academy, which challenged me to think critically and question things. I learned the importance of fighting back and picking my battles. I've demonstrated that throughout my career by pushing specific policy changes to improve work-life balance, directly questioning upper management for the lack of diversity at the highest levels of the department and leading the charge to establish Bridges LGBTA employee network at Union Pacific Railroad. It can feel uncomfortable to be the one always asking why, but so far my company has been supportive. Union Pacific noticed my actions and awarded me a company coin inscribed "In recognition of your vision and courage." I hold that very dear.

As for the future, I see a lot of work ahead in my company and in the country. Now more than ever, we need people to be brave. Every positive change — no matter how small — can make a difference.

PATRICIA EVANS – CLASS OF 2006 –

I went on earn a Bachelor of Arts in 2011 and a Master of Arts in 2018 in history from Missouri State University, as well as a Master of Science in information science from the School of Information at the University of Texas at Austin 2016. While I did not take a traditional route into the sciences that many of my fellow alumni did, the Missouri Academy was still a profound experience for me and had a huge impact on my success. For me, the Missouri Academy was so much more than a chance to earn a college degree early – it was the chance to find others my age who did not fit the mold. The community I found among my fellow classmates and the residential counselors, and to some extent the staff and the professors, during my time at the Missouri Academy was incredibly important as it provided me with the encouragement I needed to continue pursuing my own unique interests. To that end, I have pursued a career in usability and human computer interaction.

I am a design researcher at IBM in Austin, where I am part of the Cloud Infrastructure team working on a variety of enterprise level products. Prior to my position at IBM, I worked at Lexmark as a senior UX designer and at Dell as a usability engineer; once again working on enterprise level products. My plans for the next year include starting classes toward an Master of Arts degree in art history at the University of Texas at Austin with a focus on Mayan script and design theory. I am also looking into teaching courses at Austin Community College, where I hope to teach classes in usability.

I am pursuing a senior role within the newly formed Design Research team at IBM, where I hope to take on projects that will shape the future of design thinking and usability at IBM.

CLASS OF 2007: TRAILBLAZERS

Name	Hometown	University attended immediately after graduating from Missouri Academy
Ashley Abele	Blue Springs, Mo.	Texas Christian University
Samantha Bean	Strafford, Mo.	Missouri State University
Jennifer Bean	Strafford, Mo.	Missouri State University
Morgan Beck	Odessa, Mo.	Missouri State University
AnnaMarie Bliss	Warrensburg, Mo.	Kansas State University
Nathan Brown	Glencoe, Mo.	Oberlin College
Sarah Cantrell	Mountain View, Mo.	University of Missouri – Kansas City
Lyndon Chen	Dexter, Mo.	Missouri University of Science & Technology
Eva Daly	Fort Leonard Wood, Mo.	US Coast Guard Academy
Killian Ditch	Garden City, Mo.	Missouri State University
Nik Fusco	Linneus, Mo.	Missouri University of Science & Technology
Jonathan Gigax	Marshfield, Mo.	Missouri University of Science & Technology
David Griffin	Monett, Mo.	Missouri University of Science & Technology
Rob Haines	Salem, Mo.	Missouri University of Science & Technology
Jesse Hamm	Blue Springs, Mo.	Northwest Missouri State University
John Henson	Caruthersville, Mo.	Florida Institute of Technology
Mallory Higgins	Summersville, Mo.	Drury University
Peter Hodges	St. Louis, Mo.	Northwest Missouri State University
Brandon Hughes	Sedalia, Mo.	Florida Institute of Technology
Kelsey Jordan	Grandview, Mo.	Missouri University of Science & Technology
Matt Kern	St. Peters, Mo.	Carnegie Mellon
Melanie Maassen	Jefferson City, Mo.	Missouri University of Science & Technology
Heather McGhee	Fredericktown, Mo.	Saint Louis University
Aaron McGinn	Carl Junction, Mo.	Missouri Southern
Jacob McNamee	Winfield, Mo.	Georgia Institute of Technology
Alex Neaveill	Robertsville, Mo.	University of Missouri – Columbia
Miranda Oehler	Maryville, Mo.	Stephens College
Benjamin Passer	Raytown, Mo.	Missouri University of Science & Technology
Brad Phillips	Florissant, Mo.	Missouri State University
William Shields	Ava, Mo.	Missouri University of Science & Technology
Jayson Smith	Park Hills, Mo.	Northwest Missouri State University
Christopher Spencer	Rogersville, Mo.	Tulane University
Abby Stephens	Independence, Mo.	Northwest Missouri State University
Daniel Swan	Florissant, Mo.	Missouri University of Science & Technology
Robert Walker	Hillsboro, Mo.	US Air Force Academy
Samantha White	Independence, Mo.	Westminster College
Kayla Williams	Carl Junction, Mo.	Missouri State University

MIRANDA OEHLER AND DR. NATHAN BROWN – CLASS OF 2007 –

My own experience at the Missouri Academy echoes several others' – a thorough foundation in the sciences, life-changing friendships with exemplary peers, and a welcome reprieve from the crushing boredom of high school. Unlike some others, I had no clear career goal in mind once I graduated from the Missouri Academy and later Northwest Missouri State University in 2009, but the confidence and skills I earned at the Missouri Academy have helped me meet the changes in my life, including a few vastly different career options, with conviction, assured of my own adaptability, integrity and capacity for facing challenges head on.

The Missouri Academy contributed similarly to the education and career of my husband, Nathan. After graduating from Oberlin in 2011 with a Bachelor of Arts in physics, he enrolled at Washington University in St. Louis and is in his last semester of his physics Ph.D. While finishing his dissertation, he recently started work as a software engineer, specializing in data science, at Daugherty Business Solutions, and he credits the Missouri Academy with starting his initial interest in programming.

Our plan for the coming years includes relocating to Minnesota and raising our daughter, Nyssa. The Missouri Academy was a place that brought so many benefits and so much meaning to our lives.

JOHN HENSON – CLASS OF 2007 –

I attended the Florida Institute of Technology, where I majored in Aviation Business. Thanks to the preparation the Missouri Academy provided me, I was awarded a full tuition scholarship and was involved in various on-campus organizations, holding leadership positions in some, as well as continuing my flight training. I graduated in fall 2009 with my bachelor's degree and my Commercial Pilot License and was immediately employed with GeorgiaSkies Airlines out of Athens, Georgia. While employed with GeorgiaSkies, I flew the Cessna Grand Caravan, a nine-person turboprop aircraft.

I stayed with GeorgiaSkies until October 2010 when the opportunity presented itself to move up to a larger company, flying larger aircraft at Colgan Air. While at Colgan Air, I flew the Bombardier Q400, which is a 74 seat turboprop aircraft. My time at a single company was once again short as I was soon able to jump to SkyWest Airlines in May 2012 to fly the Canadair Regional Jet 700, a 70-seat passenger jet.

Finally, after nearly eight years of applying, I received an invitation to interview with Delta Air Lines in 2017. After a stressful two-day interview process I was offered a job and started class in November 2017 as a first officer on the McDonnel Douglas MD-88, a 149-passenger aircraft based out of Atlanta, Georgia.

I attribute all of the success in my career to the Missouri Academy. Without my two years in Maryville, there's not a doubt in my mind that I wouldn't be where I am today, flying for an airline that I've dreamed of working for since I was a little boy. Throughout my 8-year journey to Delta, the Missouri Academy came up as a topic in each and every interview, and it was always the easiest thing to discuss because of my heartfelt connection to a program that didn't just educate me academically but also shaped me into the man I am today, and for that I will always be grateful.

DANIEL SWAN – CLASS OF 2007 – AND ERIN SPICHER SWAN – CLASS OF 2008 –

I am married to Erin Spicher, who is a Missouri Academy graduate of 2008. I am a computer programmer by trade, employed by Suddenlink Communications in St. Louis. I am also an avid player of video games and participate in medieval reenactment. My love of technology started early in my life, but came to fruition while attending the Missouri Academy.

When I started at the Missouri Academy, I was full of excitement; at 16, I was ready to take on the world. During my two years at the Missouri Academy, I came to realize many things that have helped me to this day. One of the greatest things I learned was the value of hard work. I came from a good high school, but I was not challenged academically, at least in most subjects. The chance to take college classes was one of the major draws of the Missouri Academy program. I also enjoyed the atmosphere. I lived with students from different backgrounds, yet we all had at least one thing in common – a desire to learn. In the semesters that followed, I built many relationships with my fellow classmates, some I keep up with to this day.

After graduating from the Missouri Academy, I attended the Missouri University of Science and Technology, known as the University of Missouri-Rolla at the time, where I studied computer science. I learned many valuable skills there, but with the benefit of the Missouri Academy behind me excelled at many of my classes, and completed my degree in three years. During this time, I had the opportunity to take part in an 8-month cooperative education program with Toyota Engineering and Manufacturing North America in Georgetown, Kentucky. There, I applied many of the skills I learned both at the Missouri Academy and Missouri S&T, as well as further developed my skills as a computer scientist and professional. I graduated from Missouri S&T with a Bachelor of Science in computer science.

JENNIFER BEAN – CLASS OF 2007 –

I attended Missouri State University in Springfield, Missouri, and completed a Bachelor of Science with a major in physics and minors in computer science and mathematics in 2012. I went on to the University of Missouri-Columbia and completed a Master of Science in nuclear engineering in 2014.

I enjoyed learning more about the different science disciplines at the Missouri Academy. It gave me more time to determine what I wanted to major in when I graduated. I don't know if I would have focused on physics if I hadn't gone to the Missouri Academy. I enjoyed being challenged and it was great to not be bored during the last two years of high school. It also helped me to realize I needed to study.

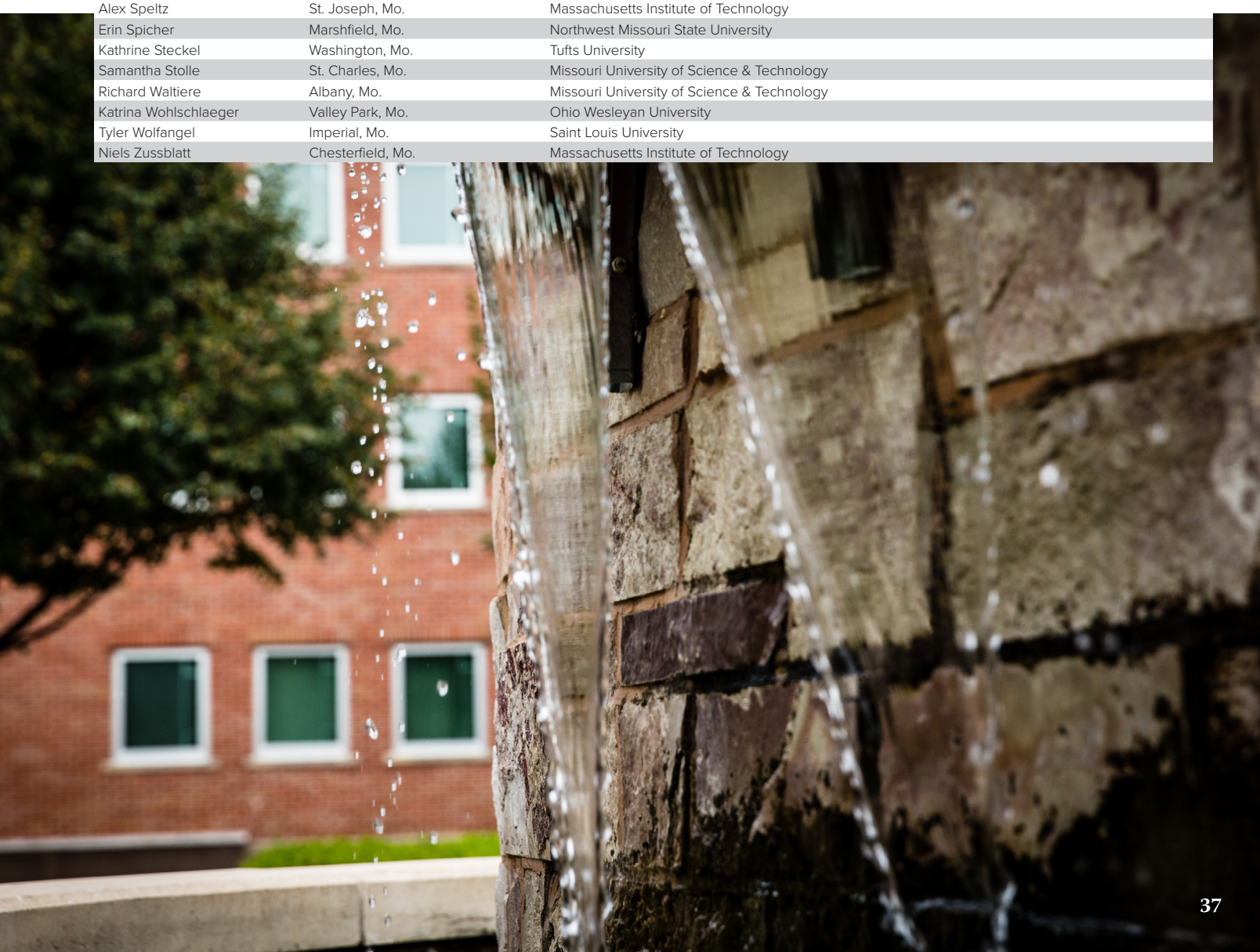
Since graduating, I've worked at Los Alamos National Laboratory and I am working for Bechtel Inc. on the Hanford Waste Treatment and Immobilization Plant as a radiological engineer. I perform shielding calculations in my work for radioactive sources. I do this using computer modeling programs, MCNP and Attila. I've also started snowshoeing and scuba diving.

I will take the American Board of Health Physics exam to become a certified health physicist in the next two years. I also plan to take the professional engineering exam for nuclear engineering.

I really enjoyed my time at the Missouri Academy. It was a great benefit in helping me learn and focus. It was a great benefit for promoting STEM activities as well as challenging students to do better.

CLASS OF 2008: NAVIGATORS

Name	Hometown	University attended immediately after graduating from Missouri Academy
Joshua Armstrong	Florissant, Mo.	University of Missouri-Columbia
Shaye Boukaert	Hillsboro, Mo.	Saint Louis University
Alex Bradford	St. Joseph, Mo.	Northwest Missouri State University
Jessica Brooks	Rich Hill, Mo.	University of Kansas
Craig Burkhart	Wentzville, Mo.	Harvey Mudd College
Sybil Coe	Harrisonville, Mo.	University of Missouri-Kansas City
Ehren Ekhause	Springfield, Mo.	University of Missouri-Kansas City
Jessica Ellis	Leeton, Mo.	University of Missouri-Columbia
Cassie Gray	Kansas City, Mo.	University of Missouri-Columbia
Sarah Hargis	St. Charles, Mo.	Murray State University
Faith Johnson	Orem, Utah	Brigham Young University-Provo
Zachary Kallenborn	Madison, Wis.	University of Puget Sound
Parker Kessler	Lee's Summit, Mo.	Missouri University of Science & Technology
George Klenklen	Kansas City, Mo.	Missouri University of Science & Technology
Nick Main	Gainesville, Mo.	Missouri University of Science & Technology
Corey Merrifield	Park Hills, Mo.	Saint Louis University
Kyle Mikel	Cairo, Mo.	Saint Louis College of Pharmacy
Angela Murphy	Marshfield, Mo.	University of Missouri-Kansas City
Hiren Patel	Jefferson City, Mo.	University of Missouri-Columbia
Alexander Portis	Tecumseh, Mo.	Truman University
Amandeep Rakhra	Maryville, Mo.	University of Missouri-Columbia
Niharika Rath	Maryland Heights, Mo.	University of Missouri-Kansas City
James Rea	Adrian, Mo.	Drury University
Brianna Reese	DeSoto, Mo.	Saint Louis College of Pharmacy
Michael Richardson	Richmond, Mo.	Midwestern Baptist Theological Seminary
Kelsi Sapp	Oak Grove, Mo.	Baylor University
Alex Speltz	St. Joseph, Mo.	Massachusetts Institute of Technology
Erin Spicher	Marshfield, Mo.	Northwest Missouri State University
Kathrine Steckel	Washington, Mo.	Tufts University
Samantha Stolle	St. Charles, Mo.	Missouri University of Science & Technology
Richard Waltiere	Albany, Mo.	Missouri University of Science & Technology
Katrina Wohlschlaeger	Valley Park, Mo.	Ohio Wesleyan University
Tyler Wolfangel	Imperial, Mo.	Saint Louis University
Niels Zussblatt	Chesterfield, Mo.	Massachusetts Institute of Technology



DR. ANGELA MURPHY – CLASS OF 2008 –

The achievements I made in 10 years would not have been possible without the opportunity to attend the Missouri Academy. As a first-generation college student in a rural area, there were limited resources in my hometown for talented students and almost no examples of how to attend college cost-effectively. Attending the Missouri Academy gave me a much-needed jumpstart on my education academically and financially, and now I can say with pride that I completed my Ph.D. in May 2017, debt-free.

In addition to my Ph.D. in rhetoric and graduate certificate in African and African American studies from the University of Kansas, I also earned a master's in English from Northwest Missouri State University in 2013, and a bachelor's in creative writing from University of Missouri-Kansas City in 2010. Throughout my time at each of these universities, I made a concerted effort to make my university a better place for myself and my colleagues – lessons I learned in my cohort at the Missouri Academy.

While at the University of Kansas, I served as the graduate affairs director and advocated for graduate student rights, including pay and health insurance at the university, state and national level. I also worked directly with the chancellor as the co-chair of a task force to address sexual violence on campus through changes to policy and campus culture.

Throughout my time at KU, multiple media outlets relied on my clear, informed opinions about the issues facing the university at the local and national level.

Over the next few years, I plan to continue traveling for my research on international women's rights while maintaining a home-base in Kansas City, Missouri, I have visited 17 countries, so far, and speak three languages. Though I have considered many opportunities that would take me out of the state or out of the country, I believe my expertise is best employed in the state in which I was raised.

When people ask me about my background, I always tell them I was

MICHAEL RICHARDSON – CLASS OF 2008 –

I attended Midwestern Baptist Theological Seminary and then finished a bachelor's degree in biblical studies from Liberty University Online in 2011. During this time I worked for a freight company for two years and then had an opportunity to travel abroad to South Korea for a year while I completed my degree. Upon completion of my degree, I returned to Maryville as a youth pastor at the First Baptist Church. I worked to teach and train youth in following Jesus for about a year while also substitute-teaching at the local high school. I went on to help start a small church in Maryville that is focused on propagating the Gospel and helping the community in tangible ways. I continue to be actively involved in teaching others about Jesus and how to follow Him through a variety of means, including youth ministry, guest preaching, and collegiate ministry. Serving Jesus in this way is the most important thing I do.

While at First Baptist, I found myself in need of additional income, so I started my own business doing personal computer repairs and freelance technical support that led to my current career. In 2013, I entered employment at Midwest Data Center, based in Rock Port, Missouri. I started doing a mixture of Tier 2 technical support and technical sales and engineering and have advanced to be a team leader, senior technician and project manager.

In May 2015, I married Sami Kretzer, of St. Joseph, Missouri, who is now a graduate of Northwest. We welcomed our first child in February 2018 and we plan to continue living in Maryville for the foreseeable future. I hope to continue serving and training others to follow Christ in such a way that they go on to train others. I also intend to grow my technical knowledge so I can continue to provide excellent IT services and solutions to others.

My time at the Missouri Academy helped me greatly in developing my character and work ethic early on by placing responsibility and freedom upon me sooner than otherwise would have been possible. The Missouri Academy also helped me earn my undergraduate degree a year early by fulfilling many of my general education requirements. Finally, the Missouri Academy provided an atmosphere of brilliance in the STEM fields that was formative to my current IT and technology skills. I'm glad to say that my time at the Missouri Academy was one of the best of my life, and I couldn't be happier I got to experience it.

raised on a farm in rural Missouri but I went to university when I was 16 years old. Every single person who knows this about me is impressed, and every person who learns this about me always wants to know more. I explain that I had an incredible chance to attend a STEM program at Northwest Missouri State University, called the Missouri Academy, and that students like me with lower incomes and fewer opportunities were just as welcome as the kids whose families could afford the tuition. Perhaps that is the sticking point for me about my time at the Missouri Academy: It was an opportunity to excel academically when no other opportunity existed.

Though academics were incredibly important at the Missouri Academy, so was the idea of being an intelligent citizen. Without the Missouri Academy, I would not have any of the opportunities I have today as an international advocate and published scholar, and I certainly would not have the education credentials that my colleagues and peers value so highly. I always heard the words "integrity and quality" from Dr. Cleo Samudzi and the staff regarding our education and what we did with it throughout our lives. As a young professional at the start of a successful career, I can confidently say I brought those values with me after I completed the program and do my best to exemplify them daily.

DR. NIELS ZUSSBLATT – CLASS OF 2008 –

I attended the Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT), receiving a Bachelor of Science in chemical engineering in 2012, and the University of California, Santa Barbara, receiving a Ph.D. from the chemical engineering department in 2017.

After completion of my Ph.D., I moved to Hillsboro, Oregon, to accept a position as an engineer with Intel, where I work to ensure that Moore's Law regarding increasing density of transistors and consequent increase in computational power per unit area continues into the future.

I enjoy traveling to new places and interacting with the local cultures. During 2016 and 2017, I visited Australia once, and all other inhabited continents at least twice.

The Missouri Academy contributed to my success by promoting my personal independence, providing a challenging academic environment, and helping to differentiate my applications for subsequent undergraduate and graduate university programs. Since the Missouri Academy was located across the state from my childhood home in Chesterfield, I was required to solve my own problems and be my own advocate more than I would have had I not attended the Missouri Academy. Being forced to develop this independence at a relatively earlier age than most of my peers has greatly benefited my ability to serve as a leader and take responsibility for managing projects or teams of people. However, I think the greatest benefit was that the Missouri Academy provided a means to differentiate my application portfolio when I was applying to universities afterward. As best I can tell, admissions departments look very favorably on students that have already proven they can handle university level work and were self-motivated to seek it out during their high school years. Further, through collaboration with the professors at Northwest Missouri State University, I had the opportunity to work on projects that would not have been available through my original high school. For example, with Professor Dr. Mike Bellamy of the Northwest chemistry department, I was involved in the design of a solar-powered water pasteurization device and its assembly on-site at an orphanage in Haiti. I believe that in addition to the general good of such a project, my involvement in it – which was only possible through attending the Missouri Academy -- made my applications stand out, helping me to be admitted to top-tier undergraduate and graduate programs.

CLASS OF 2009: VANGUARDS

Name	Hometown	University attended immediately after graduating from Missouri Academy
Mandeep Babbra	O'Fallon, Mo.	University of Missouri-Kansas City
Amanda Baker	Boonville, Mo.	Colorado State University-Pueblo
Victoria Barr	Oak Grove, Mo.	Marquette University
Renee Blair	Mexico, Mo.	Tulane University
Samuel Bowman	Richmond, Mo.	California Polytechnic University - SanLuis Obispo
Jeong In Byeon	Seoul, South Korea	Johns Hopkins University
Alicia Cox	Sweet Springs, Mo.	University of Missouri-Columbia
Cody Dickerson	Plattsburg, Mo.	University of Pittsburgh
Maggie Doerge	St. Charles, Mo.	University of Missouri-Columbia
Hayley Donner	Kansas City, Mo.	Florida Institute of Technology
Amanda Foster	Jefferson City, Mo.	Missouri University of Science & Technology
Daniel Franklin	St. Louis, Mo.	Missouri University of Science & Technology
Nathan Freeman	Jefferson City, Mo.	University of Missouri-Columbia
Neeraja Ganeshraj	St. Charles, Mo.	University of Missouri-Columbia
Nicholas Gieselman	St. Louis, Mo.	Missouri University of Science & Technology
Megan Glibert	Licking, Mo.	Missouri University of Science & Technology
Jackson Herbst	Napoleon, Mo.	Florida Institute of Technology
Joshua Jackson	Florissant, Mo.	Creighton University
Sarah Jafari	Branson, Mo.	University of Missouri-Kansas City
Michael Jemison	Kansas City, Mo.	Harvard University
Raquel Kemna	Russellville, Mo.	University of Missouri-Kansas City
Bu-Yi Kim	Gyeonggi-do, South Korea	Penn State University
In Gun Kim	Sungnam-Si, South Korea	Syracuse University
Je Woong Kim	Seoul, South Korea	Korea Advanced Institute of Science & Technology
Tae Young Kim	Gyeongsangnam-do, South Korea	Georgia Institute of Technology
Je Kyung Kim	Seoul, South Korea	Korea Advanced Institute of Science & Technology
Elizabeth Koch	Columbia, Mo.	Truman State University
Katherine Kramme	Rolla, Mo.	University of Missouri-Columbia
Ihnbeom Lee	Daegu, South Korea	Purdue University
Jee Yun Lee	Seoul, South Korea	Cornell University
Taylor Lenox	Rolla, Mo.	Creighton University
Elizabeth Maag	St. Louis, Mo.	Colorado School of Mines
Deanna MacMillan	Warrensburg, Mo.	US Air Force
Courtney Maloney	Azusa, Calif.	University of California-Berkeley
Diara McCole	Florissant, Mo.	Missouri University of Science & Technology
John McKeever	Arnold, Mo.	Truman State University
Kate McNabb	Queen City, Mo.	Truman State University
Alena Morgan	Nixa, Mo.	Texas A&M-Galveston
Jaleeza Owens	Kansas City, Mo.	University of Missouri-Columbia
Hyeyoung Park	Tulsa, Okla.	University of Illinois - Urbana/ Champaign
Sung Woo Park	Gyeonggi-do, South Korea	Rice University
Anthony Parks	Florrisant, Mo.	Stanford University
Laura Phillips	Independence, Mo.	Saint Louis University
Dylan Pisechko	Kansas City, Mo.	University of Missouri-Columbia
Victoria Poplin	Independence, Mo.	University of Missouri-Kansas City
George Ransom	Grain Valley, Mo.	Colorado School of Mines
Lacie Reichardt	Middletown, Mo.	Hendrix College
Ellen Richardson	Richmond, Mo.	Missouri University of Science & Technology
Bryce Romans	Osceola, Mo.	University of Missouri-Columbia
Daniel Sampliner	Rockville, Mo.	Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute
Joshua Santoli	Grain Valley, Mo.	University of Missouri-Columbia
Cody Smith	Grain Valley, Mo.	University of Kansas
Josef Stark	New London, Mo.	University of Missouri-Columbia
Abigail Sullivan	Independence, Mo.	Saint Louis University
Micah Uptegrove	Stover, Mo.	University of Missouri-Columbia
Phillip Venice	Wentzville, Mo.	University of Pennsylvania
Caleb Washburn	Jackson, Mo.	University of Missouri-Columbia
Amanda Werner	Arnold, Mo.	Northwest Missouri State University
Nicole Winkelmann	Fenton, Mo.	George Washington University
Cameron Wohlschlaeger	Fenton, Mo.	Chapman University
Alex Workman	Liberty, Mo.	Missouri University of Science & Technology
Marie Young	Pleasant Hill, Mo.	Truman State University
Bryson Zullig	Carrollton, Mo.	University of Missouri-Columbia

KATE MCNABB – CLASS OF 2009 –

I continued my education at Truman State University. In 2012, I graduated with my Bachelor of Science degree in biology, and in 2015 with my Master of Arts degree in education. Since that time, I have been teaching high school science in a small rural school. I have been lucky to land a position with coworkers and students that I greatly enjoy. I am also excited to be teaching my first dual credit classes next school year. Outside of school I love spending time with my family, baking, dabbling in crafts and, more recently, training for a half marathon.

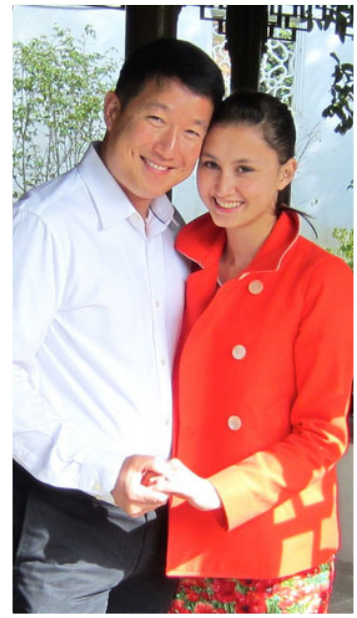
Attending the Missouri Academy was great preparation for the rigors of both completing college and teaching, and it was great in forcing me out of comfort zone to face new challenges.

NEERAJA GANESHRAJ – CLASS OF 2009 –

I attended University of Missouri-Columbia to finish my Bachelor of Science in biochemistry, graduating in 2011, and went on to complete my Master of Public Health at Washington University in St. Louis in 2013. After graduation, I relocated to San Antonio to serve as an infection prevention consultant for Infection Prevention & Management Associates and provided oversight over infection prevention programs at various hospital systems. I'm currently an infection prevention coordinator at the Baylor Scott & White Medical Center in Plano, Texas. I am also an active member in the Association of Professionals in Infection Prevention and Epidemiology (APIC) and am involved in the local community through providing education sessions to high school students and serving as a mentor for students looking to work in the healthcare setting. I plan on going back to school to obtain a Master of Business Administration in hopes of transitioning to a management role in healthcare.

The Missouri Academy opened so many opportunities for me from the moment I graduated. Not only was I able to expedite my college career, I was able to develop skills to accelerate my professional goals. My employers are always pleasantly surprised and impressed when I talk about the program and, as a result, view me as a valuable asset to their team. I strongly believe that having attended the Missouri Academy created the momentum I needed to have a successful career. I also developed lifelong friendships with the people I met at the Missouri Academy; we shared many impactful experiences that are only unique to the Missouri Academy community and have positively shaped my values and beliefs. I thank all the Missouri Academy staff and Dr. Samudzi for being inspirational leaders in providing the environment that allowed us to find our passions.

COURTNEY MALONEY – CLASS OF 2009 –



I graduated Phi Beta Kappa from the University of California-Berkeley in 2012 with a Bachelor of Science in molecular environmental biology, with high honors and a senior honors thesis. At Berkeley, I founded a student organization focused on elder care and issues in aging. My undergraduate internships included research programs through Genentech and Harvard University. I am currently a fourth-year medical student at the University of California-San Diego School of Medicine with plans on practicing in geriatric psychiatry. In my time in medical school, I have earned multiple awards in the fields of geriatrics and geriatric psychiatry, including the National Institute on Aging's Medical Student Training in Aging Research Award and the American Association for Geriatric Psychiatry/ Geriatric Mental Health Foundation General Scholarship, among others.

I am married to fellow medical student and Navy veteran, Michael Hsu. We are proud parents of our 8-month-old son, James. Both Michael and I anticipate graduating with medical degrees in 2018. We will move to Baltimore County where Michael will enter his Emergency Medicine residency at Johns Hopkins University. After taking a year off from medicine to spend with our son, I plan to enter a psychiatry residency in the Baltimore area.

MICAH UPTEGROVE – CLASS OF 2009 –

I attended the University of Missouri-Columbia after my time at the Missouri Academy. In May of 2013, I received bachelor's degrees in political science and biological engineering. The Missouri Academy experience benefited me in many different ways, with one of the first post-graduation benefits being the large scholarship I received to attend Mizzou. I did not have any college savings, so I was preparing to take on huge amounts of debt to pay for myself to go to school. Thankfully, my academic credentials and the jump start I received at the Missouri Academy led to all of my educational expenses being covered.

Without the Missouri Academy, I have no doubt I would not have been accepted into my research fellowship. It ordinarily is fairly difficult to get a position in an engineering lab as a freshman, but, thanks to the Missouri Academy, I had the needed background. As an undergraduate, I did research in Dr. John Viator's laboratory, where my research focused on detecting malignant melanoma cells using photo-acoustics. I also took the opportunity to learn a little German and used my language skills to study abroad for a semester at the Eberhard Karls University of Tübingen, Germany.

After I earned my bachelor's degrees, I attended the

JALEEZA OWENS – CLASS OF 2009 –

I attended the University of Missouri-Columbia, studying business and statistics. Since graduating from Mizzou, I have found a career in project management. I worked for almost five years in the Health Care IT industry and am now in software development. My career has allowed me to gain certification in both project management and Scrum methodologies. I have remained connected to the community, recently joining the board of the Coterie Theatre here in Kansas City.

The Missouri Academy prepared me not only for "real college" but also for life beyond, instilling in me discipline, self motivation and the ability to move through challenges. I had the opportunity to step outside of my comfort zone and do things that I otherwise would not have done, like founding my own gospel choir and going on a canoe trip. The Missouri Academy also forced me to not be afraid to seek help. I am forever grateful for all the lessons I learned and the friends I made while attending the Missouri Academy.

JOSHUA SANTOLI – CLASS OF 2009 –

I have attended the University of Missouri-Columbia, and graduated with a bachelor's degree in biomedical engineering with a minor in mathematics, magna-cum-laude, in 2012. I also attended the University of Alabama and received a Master of Business Administration in 2015. I am attending St. George's University in Grenada for medical school with a planned completion in 2020. I did research through the Missouri Academy and MU – Life Sciences Undergraduate Research Opportunity (LSUROP) the summer after my first year of the Missouri Academy. I went on to do research at University of Missouri and was invited to the NASA National Space Biomedical Research Institute (NSBRI) in 2011 to do research at Ames Research Center in Mountain View, California. I worked at Cerner Corp in Kansas City after graduating from MU and was a scribe in the emergency department in Alabama while pursuing my MBA from 2013 to 2015. I'm studying every day for board exams, and the next two years of school will be clinical rotations in the U.S., most likely New York City.

The Missouri Academy made a lot of things possible for me. I had multivariate calculus done before leaving the Missouri Academy, had several research opportunities and finished my degree one year early.

University of Missouri School of Law. My first semester of law school was uneventful with the only thing of note being the planning for my wedding over Christmas break. To be fair though, my wife, Sarah, did most of the planning. We have been married for four years and have a daughter, Sadie. During my first year of law school, I also started working for the Mizzou Office of Technology Management and Industry Relations as a graduate research assistant. My primary job was to meet with professors about their inventions, perform a prior art search, determine the potential market of the invention, and make a recommendation about patenting the invention.

I graduated from law school in 2016 and now practice intellectual property litigation at Senniger Powers, LLP in St. Louis. I enjoy this work because it is demanding and combines my interests in science and being argumentative. The Missouri Academy helped me hone my skills in both of these areas and gave me the jumpstart I needed to begin my career.

AMANDA FOSTER – CLASS OF 2009 –

I highly value my two years at the Missouri Academy. In primary and secondary school, I was always looking for more challenging work, and the Missouri Academy finally allowed me to be in an environment where I could push myself academically. The Missouri Academy also provided many opportunities for extra-curricular activities and leadership experience. I was not only active in many organizations but was also the president of the First Robotics Club, the secretary of the Student Government Association (SGA), and the chair of an SGA committee. At the end of my two years, I graduated with 76 college credit hours, a 4.0 GPA and memberships in multiple honors societies. My achievements at the Missouri Academy significantly strengthened my college admission and scholarship applications. A normal high school curriculum could not have provided such an intense and rich experience.

I went on to attend Missouri University of Science and Technology in Rolla, Missouri. While attending Missouri S&T, I participated in undergraduate research and internships, including a summer in the Amgen Scholars Program at the University of California, Berkeley. I was also the vice president, and then president of Missouri S&T's iGEM team, a synthetic biology design team. Through my work in iGEM, I won two first-place awards in undergraduate research at S&T, led the creation of an extra-curricular synthetic biology lab training course and helped develop a new course on research project design in S&T's biological sciences curriculum. I graduated magna cum laude from Missouri S&T in 2013 with a Bachelor of Science degree in chemical engineering with a biochemical engineering emphasis, a Bachelor of Science in biological sciences and a minor in chemistry. The college courses I completed while attending the Missouri Academy allowed me to earn two bachelor's degrees in just four years.

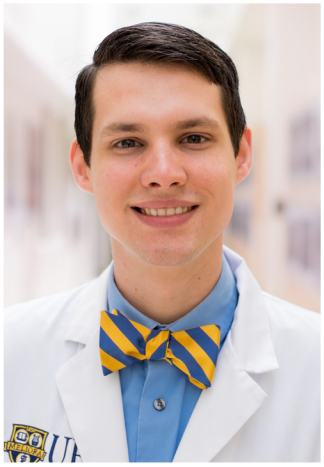
After completing my studies, I worked for Scholastic to improve fulfillment control systems. I then moved to Michigan and began working as a product engineer for Mahle, a major automotive supplier. At Mahle, I quickly became a team leader in powertrain cooling, responsible for tailoring designs to project-specific needs and customer requirements, overseeing design and process validation, and ensuring cost-effective production. After developing product knowledge as a team leader in Michigan, I accepted an assignment with Mahle at their headquarters in Germany. I am currently responsible for global design standards for passenger car heat exchangers. In the coming years, I plan to travel to Mahle development centers and manufacturing plants in India, China, the USA and several European countries as part of my work in design standardization.

I attribute much of my success in college and in my career, especially my success as a leader, to experiences gained while attending the Missouri Academy.

CLASS OF 2010: ADVENTURERS

Name	Hometown	University attended immediately after graduating from Missouri Academy
Douglas Ahnemann-Cover	Clinton, Mo.	University of Missouri-Columbia
Clayton Buback	St. Charles, Mo.	Missouri University of Science & Technology
Jung Min Byun	Seoul, South Korea	Johns Hopkins
Jeremy Carr	Joplin, Mo.	Taking a gap year
Hannah Chambers	Caruthersville, Mo.	Missouri University of Science & Technology
Kun Hee Cho	Kyunggi-Do, South Korea	Northeastern University
Daniel Choi	Lenexa, Kan.	University of California-Berkeley
MoonSoo Choi	Seoul, South Korea	University of California-Berkeley
Ethan Cooper	Plattsburg, Mo.	University of Missouri-Columbia
Darleen Denno	Waynesville, Mo.	Hofstra University
Thomas Dolan	Westphalia, Mo.	Missouri University of Science & Technology
Ashley Elfrank	Festus, Mo.	University of Missouri-Columbia
Erik Ellwood	Richland, Mo.	University of Missouri-Columbia
Nathan Engle	Wildwood, Mo.	Northwest Missouri State University
Thor Erismann	Rolla, Mo.	Northwestern University
Caroline Foust	St. Charles, Mo.	University of Missouri-Saint Louis
Charity Haugh	Cardwell, Mo.	Rockhurst University
Codi Hefner	Warrensburg, Mo.	University of Central Missouri
Kayla Hess	Powell, Mo.	Missouri Southern State University
John Jafari	Branson, Mo.	University of Missouri-Columbia
BreAnna Jahn	St. Charles, Mo.	West Virginia University
Tyler Johnson	Independence, Mo.	University of Missouri-Columbia
Melanie Kessler	Reeds Spring, Mo.	University of Arkansas-Fayetteville
Chae Yeon Kim	Seoul, South Korea	University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign
Deog Hun Kim	Gyeongsangnam-do, South Korea	University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign
Yeonjun Kim	Seoul, South Korea	Purdue University
Corbin Kreamalmeyer	Washington, Mo.	University of Missouri-Kansas City
Joseph Kurtz	Mt. Vernon, Mo.	Missouri University of Science & Technology
Kyuin Lee	Seoul, South Korea	Carnegie Mellon University
Hunter Lehr	Buffalo, Mo.	Vanguard University
Grace Link	Jefferson City, Mo.	University of Illinois
Alex Mannion	Grain Valley, Mo.	Wichita State University
Ama Mends	St. Charles, Mo.	Stephens College
Carman Merritt	St. Charles, Mo.	University of Missouri-Saint Louis
Yvette Odu	Kansas City, Mo.	Yale University
Junseok Oh	Seoul, South Korea	Cornell University
Allana Palmer	Ste. Genevieve, Mo.	University of Missouri-Columbia
Wooyoung Park	Seoul, South Korea	University of California-Los Angeles
Aurora Peck	Raytown, Mo.	Beloit College
Eric Peterson	St. Louis, Mo.	University of Miami
Wilson Pipkin	Hamilton, Mo.	University of Missouri-Kansas City
Christopher Pohlmeier	Lawrence, Neb.	University of Nebraska-Omaha
Ruth Prewitt	Walker, Mo.	University of Missouri-Columbia
Grant Rhoads	Troy, Mo.	Westminster University
Zoe Samudzi	Maryville, Mo.	University of Pittsburgh
Joseph Santoli	Grain Valley, Mo.	Truman State University
Logan Sauerbrei	Lebanon, Mo.	Missouri University of Science & Technology
Jared Sinclair	Hannibal, Mo.	University of Missouri-Columbia
Jaime Sinden	New Bloomfield, Mo.	University of Missouri-Kansas City
Shivani Singh	Fenton, Mo.	Saint Louis University
Erica Smith	O'Fallon, Mo.	Westminster University
Margret Steele	St. Peters	Missouri University of Science & Technology
Cassidy Swain	Houston, Mo.	Georgia Polytechnic Institute
Lisa Tatro	St. Louis, Mo.	Missouri University of Science & Technology
Yi-Ching Tsai	Blue Springs, Mo.	University of Missouri-Columbia
Jacob Tuia	Maysville, Mo.	Missouri University of Science & Technology
Lance Turner	Adrian, Mo.	University of Missouri-Kansas City
Jason Wallace	Aurora, Mo.	Missouri University of Science & Technology
Penny Wang	House Springs, Mo.	Wellesley College
Kellen Wheaton	Lee's Summit, Mo.	University of Missouri-Columbia
Jacob Williams	Kansas City, Mo.	University of Missouri-Columbia
Jayla Wilson	Stover, Mo.	University of Missouri-Columbia
Sean Yoakum	Arnold, Mo.	Truman State University

CLAYTON BUBACK – CLASS OF 2010 –



After graduating from the Missouri Academy, I did what a lot of students did and went to Rolla. The Missouri University of Science and Technology offered a full scholarship, took all of my credits and had a strong reputation. The plan was to scoop up an engineering degree and eventually get a Ph.D. so I could do medical research. However, thanks to smart mentors and some formative experiences, my Ph.D. goal became an M.D. goal. I pursued both research and clinical shadowing experiences and, as I toiled away in a lab, I discovered something that countless tired students before me already had: research is hard. Working in a lab can sometimes feel futile, but I found my time in the clinical setting to be much more rewarding. Shadowing in the Yellowstone National Park exposed me to the excitement of dealing with acute problems, and shadowing nurses caring for terminally ill patients in Addis Ababa showed me how close the practice of medicine allows you to bond to patients as they let you hear their story. At the same time, my inner-engineer loved the problem-solving that medicine required as well as the collaborative approach to tricky problems. I graduated from Missouri S&T in 2014 with Bachelor of Science degrees in chemical engineering with a biochemical emphasis and in biological sciences, with minors in chemistry and philosophy.

This career goal pivot didn't happen overnight, and it occurred because I had the ability to pursue the outside experiences that interested me. I didn't have to carry 20 hours a semester to graduate since I had my Missouri Academy credits. I didn't have to work a part-time job while going to school because Rolla is generous with scholarships to Missouri Academy students. I felt comfortable approaching a professor about doing research because at the Missouri Academy professors' doors were always open. Really, the reason I found my passion was because of the Missouri Academy.

I've now finished my third year at the University of Rochester School of Medicine and Dentistry, in Rochester, New York, and spent the 2017-2018 academic year doing a medical research project in Lusaka, Zambia, sponsored by Harvard Medical School and the Doris Duke Charitable Foundation. I will graduate with my M.D. in May 2019 and then start my residency. Medical school has given me opportunity to learn about the things that fascinate me, to travel the world and to end each day feeling like I'm doing something to help others. While I am not the youngest member of my class, I am well below the average age because most medical students have taken at least one gap-year before realizing that medicine is the right route for them. The Missouri Academy situated me to find my path quickly. Moving forward from here, my options seem limitless: I know I would feel comfortable in a variety of medical specialties, and I could end up anywhere in the U.S. for my residency. I'm grateful for the path I'm on, and I owe a huge debt to the Missouri Academy for helping me find it.

ZOE SAMUDZI – CLASS OF 2010 –

I matriculated at the University of Pittsburgh for further studies and earned a Bachelor of Arts in political science with an international relations concentration and certificates in global studies and African studies. From there, I went on to study in England, where I received my Master of Science from the London School of Economics in 2014. My studies were focused in health, community and development in the Department of Social Psychology. My master's degree research examined gendered notions of shame, stigma, agency and empowerment through the theoretical lens of hegemonic gender constructs to investigate how cisgender male and transgender female sex workers in Cape Town, South Africa, construct their identities. That research work has now been published.

Beginning in August 2016, I enrolled as a Ph.D. student in medical sociology in the Department of Social and Behavioral Sciences at the University of California-San Francisco. My research interests include science and technology studies, bio-medicalization theory, transgender health, critical race theory, social determinants of health and social epidemiology, gender, HIV and population disparities, and community participation and participatory research methods. I am also a fellow for the 2017-2018 Yerba Buena Center for the Arts (YBCA) Fellows Program in the Public Imagination Cohort.

It is clear that, so far in my educational career, the experience at the Missouri Academy has positively impacted my work ethic and study habits. I credit the Missouri Academy for exposing me to an academically rigorous and rewarding two-year experience.

JACOB TUIA – CLASS OF 2010 –

When I graduated from the Missouri Academy and left for the Missouri University of Science and Technology, I believed that two years' worth of academic knowledge was the bulk of what I gained from my time there. Between my sophomore and junior years at Missouri S&T, I served a full-time, two-year mission for The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints in North Carolina. Throughout those two years, and after, I have been struck again and again with how the Missouri Academy did not just benefit me in my academic career, but gave me a solid appreciation and foundation for interacting with different thought processes and perspectives. Graduating from Missouri S&T in 2014 with a bachelor's degree in chemical engineering, I thought I had seen the totality of what the Missouri Academy had gifted me; a solid footing in multiple disciplines and the fledgling ability to think critically served me well while I was wading through project after experiential project, 70-page report after 50-page report, and eventually, the GRE. After gaining admission to the chemical engineering master's program at Brigham Young University (BYU) in Provo, Utah, I began to understand – the foundations, skills, and relationships that were established at the Missouri Academy were just beginning to be realized.

Upon my arrival at BYU I was greeted

YVETTE ODU – CLASS OF 2010 –

Before entering the Missouri Academy, I had a rigid idea of what success looked like. I thought success was associated with a handful of job titles – doctor, lawyer, engineer or businesswoman, if one was savvy enough. I also thought the only way to get there was through straight A's. As I completed my study at the Missouri Academy, I experienced a fundamental shift in my approach to learning and my views on success. I had the opportunity to take classes that my public school would never have offered and discovered I was good at multivariate calculus and computer programming. Good grades were less a signal of intrinsic talent and more reflective of interest and effort.

By the time I graduated, I had gained new insights into how I learned and what types of careers would suit me outside of my narrow definition. I gained a learner's mindset. Because of my preparation at the Missouri Academy, I got the most value out of my undergraduate education at Yale. At Yale, I focused on challenging myself by trying a variety of courses that spanned many subject areas. I took courses in biomedical engineering, statistical data analysis, even modern art and ancient literature. My learner's mentality helped me cast a wide net and eventually focus in on my interests and abilities in healthcare data analysis. After graduating from Yale in 2014, armed with my new knowledge of what interested me, I worked hard and attained a Master of Science degree in applied economics at Johns Hopkins University in 2017. Prior to my current job, I worked at numerous organizations and made meaningful contributions to important health policy matters.

I currently work as a senior consultant at the Center for Healthcare Economics and Policy at FTI Consulting in Washington, D.C. I perform data analysis that informs business leaders and

government stakeholders on key decisions relative to their healthcare organizations. In the next year or two, I plan to learn more econometric modeling techniques to increase my impact on my job. I am confident the rest of my career will be fruitful because I have a strong foundation. The Missouri Academy was truly a life-making experience and it is one that I wish many other students get the opportunity to have.

with refresher classes called "THE BIG THREE," which is BYU chemical engineer speak for "Say goodbye to your life for a semester because you know less than you think and what you do know, you aren't that good at applying." Single assignments that took 18-plus hours, frustrating computational program development sessions and grueling qualifying exams were just the peak of the pyramid. Amid it all, I reconnected with a beautiful, opinionated girl I met at the Missouri Academy. The ability to appreciate another's perspective, a skill learned at the Missouri Academy, helped lay a foundation that blossomed into a relationship and eventually a marriage, years later. The study and work habits I developed while at the Missouri Academy helped me understand and work through the challenges presented to me, while the self-care habits I had firmly in place from taking challenging, time-consuming classes at the Missouri Academy helped me to stay healthy throughout all of it.

Now, I have the privilege of working with Dr. Andrew Fry and the Department of Energy to develop a method for delivering dry coal at high pressures to an advanced oxy-combustion reactor. Numerous challenges and opportunities are ahead of us; however, if the overall project is successful, coal could become one of the cleanest sources of energy in terms of GHG emissions.

Looking back on the last eight years, I know the Missouri Academy has not and will never stop giving of itself to me. Foundations for establishing meaningful relationships, study habits that help me contribute to the body of scientific knowledge, and a thought process that enables me to see the world as a place full of hope and wonder are all firmly rooted in my Missouri Academy experience. The Missouri Academy didn't just teach me skills to be successful in the fields of science, technology, engineering and mathematics – it taught me skills to be successful in life.

CODI HEFNER JOHANSEN – CLASS OF 2010 –

With the wonderful teachers, the amazing arboretum, the academic challenge and the freedom of imagination, a calling developed: nature conservancy. Staying with the best college, I studied zoology, psychology, and chemistry at Northwest Missouri State University. I got the chance to tutor, instruct and assist in lab classes, which sharpened my leadership skills. Upon graduation, I traveled back to Colorado, where I grew up. In the foothills, as a young mountain woman spreading my wings and swiveling my compass, I continued my studies in toxicology and botany.

Love found this young grasshopper in a mutual mountaineer who later joined the Navy. A short time after, my husband got stationed in Maryland. Though my studies have been put on hold, the stewardship of the outdoors and the constant fight for natural resources is always calling. Being dropped in the nation's capital was a blessing in disguise. The hub of non-profit organizations has prompted me to focus on the integrity and quality I have applied not only to my life but to the world in which I live. January of 2019 brings new changes and challenges as my husband and I are being re-stationed in Hawaii. In the future, I plan to complete my Ph.D. and continue the effort to inspire the youth of America to cherish the natural wonders of the world. The green campus that gave me my start has influenced hundreds of students in many paths but each one will always remember the morals and standards the leaders instilled in them. Even though I am not in Missouri anymore, the passion and drive that the Missouri Academy and Northwest gave me will follow me everywhere. As they say, once a Bearcat, always a Bearcat.

CLASS OF 2011: PIONEERS

Name	Hometown	University attended immediately after graduating from Missouri Academy
Thane Armbruster	St. Joseph, Mo.	Rochester Institute of Technology
Jasmine Bitanga	St. Louis, Mo.	Saint Louis University
Dylan Blumenthal	Jackson, Mo.	University of Missouri-Kansas City
Caleb Branstetter	Grain Valley, Mo.	University of Missouri-Columbia
Jillian Bueno	Blue Springs, Mo.	University of Missouri-Columbia
Thomas Burk	Aurora, Mo.	University of Colorado at Colorado Springs
Megan Carson	Savannah, Mo.	University of Pittsburgh
Jalayna Carter-Walton	Ferguson, Mo.	Augustana College
Gyuwon Cha	Seoul, South Korea	Brown University
Priscilla Choo	Gyeonggi-do, South Korea	Rutgers University
Anna Cole	Orrick, Mo.	Westminster College
Dustin Crouse	Eugene, Mo.	University of Virginia
Samantha Dawson	St. Peters, Mo.	Lindenwood University
Brina DeBrown	West Plains, Mo.	Arizona State University
Connor Douthat	Kansas City, Mo.	University of Missouri-Kansas City
Sarah Emerick	Lee's Summit, Mo.	University of Missouri-Columbia
Courtney Flood	Kansas City, Mo.	New York University
RaeAnn George	Springfield, Mo.	North Carolina State University
Rebecca Giboney	Jefferson City, Mo.	Missouri State University
Kyle Gruber	Peculiar, Mo.	University of Missouri-Kansas City
Plinio Anel Gutierrez Nunez	Las Tablas, Panama	University of Arkansas-Fayetteville
Nathan Harris	Pleasant Hill, Mo.	University of Missouri-Columbia
Nicole Hulsey	Florissant, Mo.	Truman State University
Sara Maria Jensen	St. Charles, Mo.	Northwest Missouri State University
Tyler Kent	Excelsior Springs, Mo.	United States Naval Academy
Bryan Kim	Seoul, South Korea	Purdue University
Dong Hee Kim	Kansas City, Mo.	University of Missouri-Kansas City
Donghwa Kim	Gyeonggi-do, South Korea	University of California-Berkeley
Jihoon Kim	Seoul, South Korea	University of California-Berkeley
Jennifer Le	St. Louis, Mo.	New York University
Hayeon Lee	Seoul, South Korea	Georgetown University
Hojin Lee	Seoul, South Korea	Georgia Institute of Technology
James Lee	Seoul, South Korea	Carleton College
Seung Hee Lee	Richland, Mo.	Boston University
Karlee Liberty	Seoul, South Korea	Northwest Missouri State University
Michael Maples	Bois D'Arc, Mo.	University of North Carolina-Chapel Hill
Lauren Mays	El Dorado Springs, Mo.	Drury University
Garrett Meyer	Stanberry, Mo.	Rose-Hulman Institute of Technology
Caleb Miller	Maryville, Mo.	University of Washington-Seattle
Juan Carlos Monterrey Gomez	Pese, Panama	Tulane University
Jayde Moran	Savannah, Mo.	University of Missouri-Kansas City
Mohammad Muhi	Maryville, Mo.	Georgia Institute of Technology
Taylor Mulik	Joplin, Mo.	Truman State University
Mikayla Muzzey	Desoto, Mo.	Northwest Missouri State University
William Newell	Lake Ozark, Mo.	Embry-Riddle Aeronautical University
Brad Nimmo	Buffalo, Mo.	University of Missouri-Columbia
A Norman	St. Peters, Mo.	Missouri State University
Ashley Nuhn	Kearney, Mo.	Missouri University of Science & Technology
Jong Youn Park	Gyeonggi-do, South Korea	Massachusetts College of Pharmacy and Health Science
Andrew Paulman	Blue Springs, Mo.	Truman State University
April Protzman	Maryville, Mo.	University of Missouri-Columbia
Rachael Protzman	Maryville, Mo.	University of Missouri-Columbia
Jennie Ransom	Grain Valley, Mo.	Brigham Young University
Alexander Ratcliff	Lake St. Louis, Mo.	University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign
Elmer Rho	Busan, South Korea	Johns Hopkins University
Stephen Ryan	Defiance, Mo.	Missouri University of Science & Technology
Peter Sable	Ozark, Mo.	Milwaukee School of Engineering
Jason Sauerbrei	Lebanon, Mo.	Missouri University of Science & Technology
Joseph Schneider	Jackson, Mo.	University of Missouri-Columbia
Florencio Serrano Castillo	Cedar Hill, Mo.	University of Arkansas-Fayetteville
Sarah Shawver	David, Panama	University of Wisconsin-Stevens Point
Fabrielle Schroeder	Ashland, Mo.	University of Minnesota-Twin Cities
Amelia Shrum	Laurie, Mo.	University of Missouri-Kansas City
Colter Snethen	Independence, Mo.	University of Missouri-Columbia
Holli Snider	Arcadia, Mo.	Lindenwood University
Jonathon Stackhouse	Holden, Mo.	Northwest Missouri State University
Jacob Taylor	Poplar Bluff, Mo.	Northwest Missouri State University
Jay Taylor	Kansas City, Mo.	Northwest Missouri State University
Lydia Welker	Perryville, Mo.	Missouri State University
Elizabeth Wilkins	Rolla, Mo.	Missouri University of Science & Technology
Jared Wyatte	Sedalia, Mo.	Missouri University of Science & Technology
Hui Lin Yang	Herculaneum, Mo.	University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign
Tricia Yates	Eureka, Mo.	William Jewell College

A NORMAN – CLASS OF 2011

I grew up in St. Peters, Missouri, and later graduated from Missouri State University, earning a Bachelor of Science in psychology in 2013. I was a member of Common Ground, a queer-straight alliance at Northwest Missouri State University and later a member of Spectrum at Missouri State University. I worked in Springfield, Missouri, with the Gay and Lesbian Center of the Ozarks to help with Pridefest and plan programs for the community.

I returned to the Missouri Academy shortly afterward to serve as a residential counselor for two years. I worked on 2East and served as advisor for Science Olympiad, Model United Nations, Health Occupations Students Association and other clubs.

After my tenure at the Missouri Academy, I worked at Progressive Turnout Project in Cedar Rapids, Iowa. I canvassed the community, contributing to a voter turnout study, and worked to give Democrats resources they needed to vote. My former Missouri Academy roommate, Ian Schroeder (formerly Fabrielle Schroeder), passed away in 2016. Ian inspired me and other Pioneers to fight for the rights of others and to come out. I try to honor their memory every day.

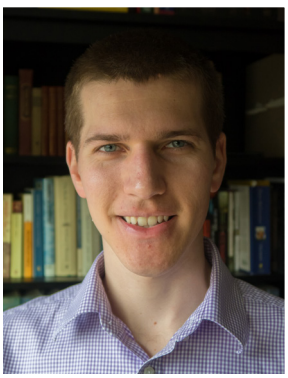
I live in Ames, Iowa with my dog and fiancé. I am studying for law school where I hope to focus on public interest law and work to protect civil liberties. I serve as a board member with Ames Pride, helping create safe spaces and programs for LGBT members in the community.

GARRETT MEYER – CLASS OF 2011 –

In elementary school, end-of-the-year award ceremonies were little more than an ego boost. Labeled as a "gifted" youth, I was no stranger to trophies for reading, writing and arithmetic. On the way home from these ceremonies, my dad would give a sincere, but admittedly small smile in congratulations. Routine is the enemy of elation. Once, however, I was recognized for character and not just comprehension. On that ride home, my dad said very specifically that while my academic accolades were great, it was the one for integrity that he cared about. I certainly could not have won any awards for popularity at my school before the Missouri Academy. I was clumsy, friendless and infatuated with learning. No one would throw me the football at recess, and no one cared when I told them that it flew in a parabola.

By my sophomore year, I was already taking half of my classes at a local college. Academically, I needed to jump wholesale into higher education. Socially, I would have floundered trying to befriend people 3 to 7 years older than me when I hadn't even learned the trick with my classmates.

The Missouri Academy, then, was the critical chain link in my education. There would have been no substitute. I loved my home, and I have no doubt that my teachers and parents loved me. But I could not stay.



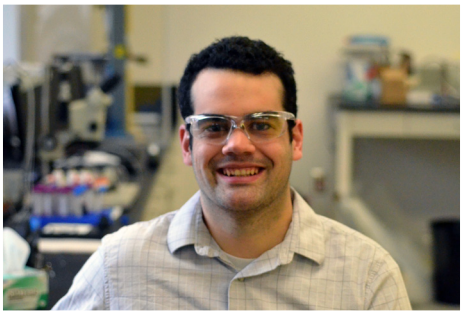
The academic environment at Northwest Missouri State University was like oxygen to a fire. For the first time in my life, I could take classes as fast as I could learn. I could be challenged by my classmates instead of feeling ashamed of my intellect. The social support at the Missouri Academy was all I had wanted my whole young life. I had gone six years without having a peer, much less a friend, taking the same math class as me. I didn't know that other kids my age might like puns, science jokes and calculus. I learned at the Missouri Academy that my education, my humor and my brains did not have to be isolating. For the first time, I wasn't alone at school.

With my newfound home at North Complex, I explored interests that I didn't even know I had. When I graduated, the Missouri Academy, I had learned how to swing dance like my grandparents, throw a Frisbee 60 yards, and integrate philosophy into my Catholic faith. These habits are now the weekly substance of my life.

I went on to graduate with a Bachelor of Science in mechanical engineering with a double major in mathematics from Rose-Hulman Institute of Technology in 2014. My transferred academic credits allowed me to also sneak in a philosophy minor in my three years as a "traditional" college student. I am now a thermal engineer for Black & Veatch, so my calculations turn fire and explosions into electricity. I live in Cincinnati, but I design and test the thermodynamics of power plants all over the world. The academic rigor of the Missouri Academy was the foundation of my career, and my Missouri Academy friends remain a source of joy. I cannot replace the community where I realized that my intelligence could be a gift for others, rather than a burden to be suppressed.

One more Missouri Academy memory continues to drive me. At my last end-of-the-year award ceremony at the Missouri Academy, I won the academic award for graduating seniors. One of my good friends won the character award. The final lesson of the Missouri Academy was this – there is always more to learn.

JAY TAYLOR – CLASS OF 2011 –



It is tough for me to put in words how much the Missouri Academy has meant to me. On its surface, I received a great education, skills to excel in college, and the opportunity and resources to follow my academic passions. On a deeper level, the Missouri Academy let me see my potential. At a school with the brightest kids in the state, I belonged – and I was one of them. When I graduated, I felt there was not a school or a program that was too difficult for me. If the sky was the limit, the Missouri Academy made me feel like I could sit among the stars. I would not be where I am today without the Missouri Academy and the people who made it happen. I am forever blessed, and I will always remember two of the most transformative years of my life.

I grew up in Raytown, Missouri. After the Missouri Academy, I remained at Northwest Missouri State University and graduated Summa Cum Laude in 2014 with two degrees: a Bachelor of Science in chemistry and the first awarded Bachelor of Science in nanoscale science. After Northwest, I started graduate school at the University of Nebraska-Lincoln, where I'm currently on track to graduate with a Ph.D. in materials chemistry in May 2019. In graduate school, I have been an author on six scientific publications and counting. Some of these articles have been highlighted in science news outlets, including science360.gov, Phys.org, and technology.org. I have recently been awarded the Nebraska Center for Materials and Nanoscience Graduate Research Fellowship in recognition of my work. After I graduate, I plan on pursuing a postdoctoral position with the ultimate goal of being a professor at a research-focused university.

PETER SABLE – CLASS OF 2011 –

I would not be where I am, or who I am, without the Missouri Academy. It was at this one-of-a-kind institution where my peers and I learned the fundamental guidelines on how to succeed as a person and a professional: dedication, diversity, integrity and quality. Dedicate yourself to your dreams and convictions to make them a reality. Overcome any obstacle by incorporating and relying on the diversity of friends and ideas. Be an honorable person with integrity and take pride in the quality of who you are and what you do.

Since saying goodbye to my fellow Pioneers, these ideals and the Missouri Academy experience helped me earn a full ride to the Milwaukee School of Engineering, in their nationally ranked mechanical engineering baccalaureate program. I graduated from the program with honors after only three years in 2014 with a minor in mathematics. From there, I went on to earn a master's degree in mechanical engineering from Marquette University, specializing in experimental ballistics. Currently, I am funded by the Department of Defense through the Science, Mathematics and Research for Transformation (SMART) scholarship to complete my Ph.D. at Marquette, where I expect to graduate in 2019. My research seeks to understand how materials behave at extreme pressures and temperatures and use findings to inform engineering design.

More so than earning degrees, this Missouri Academy-enabled path has provided the honor and opportunity to work with the best and the brightest from all over our country. Spending summers at world-renowned institutions like Sandia National Laboratories and the Air Force Research Laboratory, I have been able to make real contributions as a scientist and engineer. These experiences have proved time and again the continued importance of dedication, diversity, integrity and quality, and how they make a difference every day in the form of scientific innovation and discovery.

At each twist and turn in the path, the greatest experiences have been the people; whether it be the friends and the family you see every day, or the long-lost buddies seen every once in a while. These relationships wouldn't exist without the Missouri Academy and wouldn't be maintained without the integrity and quality taught there.

After completing my Ph.D., I will have the privilege of serving as a civilian scientist at the Air Force Research Laboratory, applying the knowledge I have been gifted to serve our nation. However, I'll never forget where I came from or how I got here. It was an honor to be a Pioneer. The academic rigor prepared me to face many of the challenges life has had to offer, and the people along the way have been a consistent source of kindness and support. The Missouri Academy as a whole, especially the staff who brought the place to life, are to be commended for creating such an experience and for providing each cohort with a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity.

CLASS OF 2012: GUARDIANS

Name	Hometown	University attended immediately after graduating from Missouri Academy
Connor Abbott	Wright City, Mo.	University of Missouri-Columbia
Eun Jin Ahn	Seoul, South Korea	Handong Global University
Katie Alexander	Lee's Summit, Mo.	University of Missouri-Columbia
William Aumann	Barnhart, Mo.	Northwest Missouri State University
Victoria Bailey	Marble Hill, Mo.	University of Missouri-Columbia
Sean Bartlett	Blue Springs, Mo.	University of California-Berkeley
Amanda Baumann	St. Joseph, Mo.	University of Missouri- Kansas City
Trevor Beyatte	St. Genevieve, Mo.	University of Missouri-Columbia
Alexander Boren	Hannibal, Mo.	Northwest Missouri State University
Brianna Cagle	Lone Jack, Mo.	University of Missouri- Kansas City
Caitlin Canfield	Republic, Mo.	Missouri State University
Tarrin Casey	St. Louis, Mo.	Xavier University of Louisiana
Fernando Chial	Panama City, Panama	University of Toronto
Hye Ryung Cho	Seoul, South Korea	Carnegie Mellon University
Samantha Compton	Independence, Mo.	Northwest Missouri State University
Ashton Corson	Maryville, Mo.	Seattle University
Jacqueline Dillon	Cuba, Mo.	Northwest Missouri State University
Brock Ebert	Downing, Mo.	Missouri University of Science & Technology
Christopher Everett	O'Fallon, Mo.	Missouri University of Science & Technology
Gretchen Ferguson	Washington, Mo.	Rice University
Christian Gentry	Holts Summit, Mo.	University of Missouri-Columbia
Daniel Grooms	Barnhart, Mo.	Missouri University of Science & Technology
Yujia Guo	Beijing, China	University of Oxford
Sheldon Harper	Cassville, Mo.	Missouri University of Science & Technology
Emily Hibbits	St. Louis, Mo.	Missouri University of Science & Technology
Joshua Huels	Hillsboro, Mo.	Missouri University of Science & Technology
Jae Yeon Hur	Seongnam, South Korea	University of California-Berkeley
Yongxin Ji	Hong Kong, China	University of California-Berkeley
Duncan Kelly	Ste. Genevieve, Mo.	Northwest Missouri State University
William Larson	Springfield, Mo.	University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign
Jee Min Lee	Seoul, South Korea	Columbia University
Yoon Hyung Lee	Seoul, South Korea	Saint Louis University
Madeline Marsh	Liberty, Mo.	Missouri University of Science & Technology
Jaykob Maser	Braymer, Mo.	Missouri University of Science & Technology
Kasey Metts	Joplin, Mo.	Northwest Missouri State University
Jasmine Meyer	St. Joseph, Mo.	University of Missouri-Columbia
Logan Muzzey	DeSoto, Mo.	Saint Louis College of Pharmacy
Thomas O'Connor	Smithville, Mo.	Vassar College
Aakash Patel	Clinton, Mo.	Northwest Missouri State University
Christopher Pratt	Cameron, Mo.	Brigham Young University-Provo
Jesse Pyatt	Fenton, Mo.	Truman State University
Adam Roach	Garden City, Mo.	Northwest Missouri State University
Jeremiah Robertson	Springfield, Mo.	Georgia Institute of Technology
Taylor Russo	Florissant, Mo.	Northwest Missouri State University
Kevin Ryan	Defiance, Mo.	Missouri University of Science & Technology
Kristian Shupe	Waynesville, Mo.	Northwest Missouri State University
Carl Slagle	Blue Springs, Mo.	Missouri University of Science & Technology
Brittney Spratt	Raytown, Mo.	University of Missouri- Kansas City
Gretta Stark	New London, Mo.	Truman State University
Miriam Sutton	Jamesport, Mo.	American University
Brett Wheeler	Fordland, Mo.	University of Virginia
Troy Whistler	Moberly, Mo.	University of Missouri-Columbia
Sara Williams	Imperial, Mo.	University of Arkansas-Fayetteville

YUJIA GUO – CLASS OF 2012 –

I entered the University of Oxford in the United Kingdom, majored in engineering science with a specialization in electronics and information engineering and graduated with a master's degree in four years. During my study, I co-founded and led the Oxford Chinese Orchestra, and participated in various performances. After my graduation in 2016, I came to Dubai as I was selected in the Dubai Business Internships Program, a one-year management training program under the patronage of the Ruler of Dubai to promote multicultural business exposures and young talent development through taught courses and internship opportunities in public and private sector.

Upon completion of the program in 2017, I joined the largest bank in the Middle East as a quantitative analyst in risk management. I also co-founded my start-up with my friend who is also a Cambridge alumnus. Our business focuses on helping talented young students get the best education opportunities by knowledge and experience sharing and intensive training by people who have gone through the journey. Our team is expanding fast and is almost all Oxbridge alumni. I am preparing for the Charted Financial Analyst (CFA) Exam to advance my knowledge in the financial industry. In the meantime I am working on business development on the education start-up, arranging online and offline events and coming up with new business projects.

I cannot express with my words how thankful I am for my experience with the Missouri Academy and how much the Missouri Academy life meant to me. It was only two years, yet it indeed had, and will have, a lifelong impact on me. I will only share a few things that I learned from the Missouri Academy but there are more that I keep in my heart. The first thing the Missouri Academy taught me was to make my own choices. Coming from a public

MIRIAM JULIANNA "ANNA" SUTTON – CLASS OF 2012 –

I am a Missouri native whose mother was raised in the Amish church and never received an education past the eighth grade. As the first college graduate from my family, I credit much of the success I have experienced to my time at the Missouri Academy.

After graduating, I went on to earn my bachelor's degree in international relations with a focus on equitable and sustainable urban communities in May 2015 from the American University in Washington, D.C., with the distinction of being a part of the Global Scholars cohort who complete their degree in three years through a combination of mentorship and international study programs.

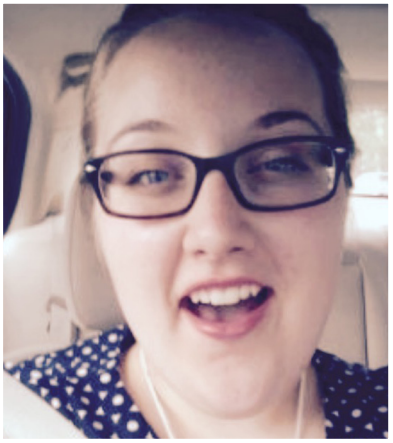
I am thankful for my time at the Missouri Academy and for the way that time has shaped my pursuit toward building equitable communities in my current work as a community organizer around food systems and arts and culture for the affordable housing development firm Telesis Corp. From Dr. Samudzi's leadership in regard to integrity and quality – I can still hear the echoes of I.Q.'s "true" definition – to the education I received from my peers about the benefits of true diversity, I carry my time in those yellow halls in my mind and my actions always.

Over the next two years I will be paying back the emotional support my Missouri Academy Residential Counselor Amea Chandler invested in me by supporting my 16-year-old sister in Washington, D.C., so she can complete high school while continuing in my position as a community coordinator for low-income communities. Upon her graduation, I hope to travel and work abroad with the end goal of pursuing a graduate degree within the next five years. I still daydream about being president, but these days I hope to be the fifth female president instead of the first.

As some of you are aware, a 2011 Missouri Academy graduate, Ian Schroeder (formerly Fabrielle Schroeder), passed away from complications related to cancer the day after President Trump was elected after initially being denied medical care, based on gender identity. Beyond being the first openly gay friend I had, Ian taught me more about confronting my own biases and challenging discrimination in our society than anyone I have met since. I am thankful for the Missouri Academy for being the institution that was the foundation of our friendship. Since Ian's death, I have launched an art series, titled "Searching for Eon," as a way to engage directly around trans* inclusion in our institutions and communities. If you are interested in hearing more about this project, reach out to me on social media - @miriamjsutton

school in China, I was used to living a prearranged life: courses I take, things I do, clothes I wear, etc. The Missouri Academy provided me with choices to make myself. I was encouraged to pursue what I want and, more importantly, to have a vision for my future goal. Secondly, I learned to support. I was never alone in my days. Dr. Cleo, Pele, Sue and the lovely staff, my RC Margaret, Emily, Jerry, Amea, Lisa and other RCs, the CLs, and all the seniors and juniors were always there to help me. When I arrived, I was confused and in cultural shock, but with the help from the big family, I managed to survive and thrive. In my second year, I decided to become a CL and give back what I received. Since then I have been more than happy to help others. The third thing I learned is to take responsibility. I participated in a lot of leadership experience. I was the president of Math Team, Science Olympiad and the president of Northwest's Asian Student Association. When I signed up and campaigned for myself, I did not fully understand the responsibility I was to bear by being a leader. When I sacrificed my own time, spent extra effort, made self-development for the roles I had taken, I truly understood the difficulty and the joy of being responsible. Last but not the least, I gained lifelong friendships at the Missouri Academy. I am sure the Missouri Academy motto, Integrity and Quality, will be carried in all our hearts. I wish all Missouri Academy alumni, staff and friends the very best in their lives.

GRETTA STARK – CLASS OF 2012 –



The Missouri Academy is much more than a college preparatory academy. To myself, my family and all the students who lived within its walls, the Missouri Academy was a community of scholars – a place that provided its students with academic, social, leadership and networking opportunities that would otherwise not be available to them.

I attended Truman State University and graduated from there in 2016 with a Bachelor of Science degree in mathematics with the intention of doing post-undergraduate work toward obtaining a teaching license. I am preparing for my certification exams while working with a local school district. I work closely with special education students to help them reach both academic and social goals. Once I complete the certification process, I will be hired as a permanent special education teacher. Without the Missouri Academy, I doubt I would have been presented with such a wonderful, promising future.

I grew up in a small, rural community where there was not as much opportunity for higher level education classes, so the focus was on sports, not academics. Without the Missouri Academy, I would not have obtained a solid educational foundation that allowed me to become who I am today.

My relationship with the Missouri Academy and its staff actually began in 2007, when my brother Josef Stark, a 2009 graduate, moved into the North Complex building. My brother had to sacrifice his high school athletics to attend the Missouri Academy. However, Robert Bryant and other staff members made sure he was aware of intramural sports opportunities on campus and sporting events like SLAMT. A year later, my other brother, David Stark, was accepted and joined the class of 2010. It is easy to see that my family has always had a lot of respect and admiration for the Missouri Academy. The staff members care for all the students they encounter and take the time to invest in each student's safety, growth and success. I will forever be grateful to the Missouri Academy for giving me these wonderful opportunities and playing such an important role in helping me become the creative, problem-solving, professional, well-rounded adult I am today.

CARL SLAGLE – CLASS OF 2012 –

During my time at the Missouri Academy, I was involved in multiple organizations including Student Government Association, Baptist Student Union and a lot of study groups. During summers, I had the opportunity to be involved in two different internships at Cerner Corporation. These internships would not have been possible without the help of the academic rigor of the Missouri Academy.

In fall 2012, I started pursuing a degree in mechanical engineering at Missouri University of Science and Technology. The Missouri Academy gave me a jumpstart in this pursuit, allowing me to start about halfway through the coursework of a mechanical engineering degree. This also allowed me to evenly distribute my coursework to get involved in campus activities, specifically Christian Campus Fellowship (CCF). Through CCF I made many close friends who shared in a common goal of spreading the gospel of Jesus to the S&T campus while also forming study groups that served as a catalyst for good grades and comprehension of the material. CCF is also how I met my beautiful wife, Tori.

In May 2014, I started a co-op at Melton Machine and Control Company. At Melton, I learned how to work long hard hours. I worked 12 hours a day, including most Saturdays that summer and semester, doing drafting work in Autodesk Inventor. This was valuable drafting experience that I still use to this day. In January 2015 I returned to S&T and continued coursework.

In May 2015, Tori and I were married, and I started an internship at Red Wing Shoe Company. This internship was the catalyst for my passion for manufacturing. During this internship, I was a process engineer, making decisions about cycle time improvements, sources of waste and many other skills.

After graduating from Missouri S&T in 2015, I went to work at Ford Motor Company as a Manufacturing Ford College Graduate – a rotational program within the Ford plant exposing me to four different aspects of manufacturing. I spent 8 months at Ford – seven months as a line supervisor and one month as a maintenance supervisor. This was very good mass production manufacturing experience. I learned what mass production looks like and how it is managed. I learned that my focus is more on quality instead of quantity as well as the importance of a work-life balance.

In October 2016, I started working for my current employer, Honeywell FM&T. This company has a primary focus on small quantity highest quality production parts.

Ultimately, the Missouri Academy kick-started my career and helped me get ahead and take advantage of many opportunities that, without the Missouri Academy, I would not have qualified for.

CLASS OF 2013: SEEKERS

Name	Hometown	University attended immediately after graduating from Missouri Academy
Victoria Abbott	Rolla, Mo.	Boston University
Mike Ahlersmeyer	Bonne Terre, Mo.	Northwest Missouri State University
Arielle Bodine	St. Charles, Mo.	Missouri University of Science & Technology
Tyler Bradford	Birch Tree, Mo.	University of Missouri-Kansas City
Jacob Brown	Stover, Mo.	Missouri University of Science & Technology
Paige Brown	Clinton, Mo.	Union College
Travis Bruce	Weston, Mo.	University of Missouri-Kansas City
Nabig Chaudhry	Battlefield, Mo.	Harvard University
Lathan Clayton	Harrisonville, Mo.	Northwest Missouri State University
Rachel Coen	Centralia, Mo.	Northwest Missouri State University
Danielle Doerr	Joplin, Mo.	University of Chicago
Rebekah Emerick	Raymore, Mo.	Missouri University of Science & Technology
Joshua Freeman	Ava, Mo.	Northwest Missouri State University
Amanda Green	Wentzville, Mo.	University of Missouri-Saint Louis
Michael Gutman	Waynesville, Mo.	Boston University
William Hargrave	Maryville, Mo.	Northwest Missouri State University
Ashley Huskey	Jefferson City, Mo.	Northwest Missouri State University
Joseph Hutchins	Nevada, Mo.	Brigham Young University
Christianne Jafari	Branson, Mo.	University of Missouri-Columbia
Emilia Kaiser	Leslie, Mo.	United States Air Force Academy
Hyolim Kang	Seoul, South Korea	Georgia Institute of Technology
Kaitlyn Kenig	Weaubleau, Mo.	Creighton University
Esther Kim	Gunpo, South Korea	University of California-Berkeley
Jangkyung Kim	Daejeon, South Korea	University of California-Berkeley
Jeongeun Kim	Seongnam, South Korea	Korea University (South Korea)
Jieun Kim	Seongnam, South Korea	Yonsei University (South Korea)
Min Seok Kim	Jeonju, South Korea	University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign
Seung Hwan Kim	Seoul, South Korea	Washington University-Saint Louis
Jacquelyn Kinney	Sweet Springs, Mo.	New York University
Samuel Knechtenhofer	Cosby, Mo.	Missouri University of Science & Technology
Bo Hyun Koo	Seoul, South Korea	Cornell University
Hyukjin Kwon	Seoul, South Korea	University of California-Berkerly
Hyeon Seung Lee	Busan, South Korea	Georgia Institute of Technology
Katlyn Lonergan	Lebanon, Mo.	Missouri University of Science & Technology
Ismael Matos	Knob Noster, Mo.	Northwest Missouri State University
Eric Matthews	El Dorado Springs, Mo.	University of California-Berkeley
Meghan McCreary	Joplin, Mo.	Oberlin College
Douglas Merry II	St. Peters, Mo.	Northwest Missouri State University
Michael Miles	Hannibal, Mo.	Missouri University of Science & Technology
Victoria Miles	Kansas City, Mo.	William Jewel College
Ji Hong Min	Anyang, South Korea	University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign
Thanh-Nhi Nguyen	Lee's Summit, Mo.	University of Missouri-Kansas City
Marina Oehler	Maryville, Mo.	Northwest Missouri State University
Zinan Pan	Guangzhou, China	University of California-Berkeley
Jinyu Park	Seoul, South Korea	University of California-Berkeley
Ye Eun Park	Springfield, Mo.	Amherst College
HooJung Rhim	Seoul, South Korea	Johns Hopkins University
Adam Shifflet	Grovespring, Mo.	Northwest Missouri State University
Kimberly Shrine	St. Louis, Mo.	Missouri University of Science & Technology
Blake Stephens	Plattsburg, Mo.	University of Kansas
Neeta Thawani	Booneville, Mo.	Georgia Institute of Technology
Brandon Tuell	Independence, Mo.	Northwest Missouri State University
Dustin Wagner	Lake St. Louis, Mo.	University of Missouri-Columbia
Avery Welker	Perryville, Mo.	Missouri University of Science & Technology
Justin Wilson	Stover, Mo.	Northwest Missouri State University
Jacob Wise	Wentzville, Mo.	University of Minnesota-Twin Cities
Jessica Wise	Wentzville, Mo.	University of Missouri-Kansas City
Hanquan Yang	Guangzhou, China	University of California-Berkeley
Seth Yarber	Ozark, Mo.	Saint Louis College of Pharmacy
Natalie Yocum	Independence, Mo.	University of Washington-Seattle
Junho Yoo	Seoul, South Korea	Georgia Institute of Technology
Yan Zhou	Beijing, China	Ohio State University

MICHAEL MILES – CLASS OF 2013 –

I attended the Missouri University of Science and Technology for three years and received a dual Bachelor of Science in electrical and computer engineering. After graduating from Missouri S&T, I started my Ph.D. in mechanical engineering at the University of Colorado Boulder, where I am in my second year of my Ph.D.

The goal of my research is to develop a system that rapidly determines how drugs and biological or chemical agents exert their effects on human cells by analyzing the cellular pathway response that occurs in the first second of drug exposure. This may enable the screening and approval of drugs in a matter of days or weeks, instead of the average 12.5 years seen in traditional drug development (Torjesen 2015). My work is primarily concerned with the design and operation of the microfluidic chip, which performs the precise, sub-second drug-to-cell exposure required for such analysis.

While I am appreciative of the educational advantage I received by starting college two years early, the most valuable asset I left the Missouri Academy with was a newfound global conscience and appreciation for people of other backgrounds and cultures. By expanding my mind both academically and socially, I have flourished as a researcher and as a person. For that, I will be forever grateful to the Missouri Academy.

It wasn't until I left home for college that I learned to appreciate the wide variety of cultures and people in

JACOB WISE – CLASS OF 2013 –

Attending the Missouri Academy seemed like an easy choice after two years of traditional high school. By the time I was a 10th grader I had exhausted the mathematics and statistics curriculum at my local high school. The Missouri Academy was the only way I could continue my education in mathematics before becoming a full traditional college student.

Five years since graduating, I consider my experiences at the Missouri Academy foundational in my pursuit of a career in applied mathematics. My time there included at least a dozen STEM courses I would not have taken otherwise, and gave me my first professional experience, doing research with a professor. I was fortunate to work with Dr. Himadri Chakraborty, writing Fortran code to study quantum nanosystems. After the Missouri Academy, I matriculated to the College of Science and Engineering at the University of Minnesota.

At the University of Minnesota, I had other chances to explore applied mathematics. In an internship with the Federal Reserve Bank of Minneapolis, I studied employment outcomes of minority populations using census data. Later, my experience with the University of Minnesota's Center for Financial and Actuarial Mathematics convinced me to shift my academic focus to quantitative finance, the application of stochastic modeling and calculus to the pricing of derivative securities.

I now work for Allianz Investment Management in Minneapolis, a subsidiary of the Munich-based Allianz SE, a German insurance and asset management firm. As a quantitative analyst on the global hedging team, I contribute to equity derivatives research and help to develop our proprietary software. Since joining Allianz, I've been surprised at how well the Missouri Academy prepared me for the work that I do: I use computer calculations and discipline-specific mathematical models to study technical problems. Looking back, I am grateful to the Missouri Academy's faculty and staff for giving me the strong STEM background that made my career possible.

my very own country and around the world. Growing up in a small town in Missouri, it is easy to adopt the close-minded principles that exist in abundance, and I was no exception to this callous custom. This did not occur from a place of malice, but rather a place of ignorance. However, at 16, I left my high school to attend the Missouri Academy, a beacon of hope for students such as myself who felt impeded by the traditional high school curriculum. Though the focus of the program was to improve the professional outcomes of Missouri students, students from all corners of the globe attended the Missouri Academy. During my time there, I spent a large portion of my time studying, chatting, questioning and learning from these international students. Perhaps surprisingly, after two years at the Missouri Academy, my most valuable takeaway was not an Associate of Science degree but my newfound appreciation for a diverse portfolio of personal connections, most of which I maintain to this day. My enlightenment was recognized with the Missouri Academy Delta Award, an award presented each year to a graduating senior who has exhibited the greatest change in character while at the Missouri Academy.

As a child from a low-income family in rural Missouri, I spent my childhood viciously passionate about science and engineering but lacked any guidance in regard to post-secondary education or STEM careers. Luckily, I had the Missouri Academy to guide me, but I fear for the education of future generations of Missouri students. With this motivation, after a satisfactory career in research, I hope to return to Missouri to run for public office so I may ensure as much as possible is being done in government to address the issues of STEM education and income inequality, particularly in areas such as rural Missouri where such guidance is lacking.

JESS WISE – CLASS OF 2013 –

I have attended the University of Missouri-Kansas City's six-year BA/MD program. I am in my fifth year in the program and will be graduate in 2019 with a medical degree. I will apply for general surgery residency in fall 2018 and will match into a residency program in March 2019. My goal is to become a pediatric surgeon. In my free time, I volunteer as a child life volunteer at Children's Mercy Hospital. I also volunteer at UMKC's free clinic, Sojourners, which provides free medical care to at-risk populations in downtown Kansas City. Additionally, I frequently attend MMA Fights as part of the medical team, providing pre- and post-fight physicals. I was UMKC's chapter president in 2014-2015 with GlobeMed, which is a student-run organization that partners with grassroots organizations around the world to allow for better access to health care and social services in Third World countries.

In addition to helping me get accepted to medical school, the Missouri Academy has had a major impact on my life. It will always be one of my many homes. The Missouri Academy gave me the opportunity to explore my own personality and grow into myself. Growing up in an environment with the freedom to fully test and expand your personality allows for personal growth and accepting who you are. My time at the Missouri Academy unlocked the full quirkiness of my own personality. I firmly believe that all teenagers should be able to grow and experiment in an environment that is both safe and supportive, while promoting the full expression of their virtues and faults. The Missouri Academy was that place for me. It provided many opportunities for me to grow and learn in a collaborative environment that allowed me to reach for my goals.

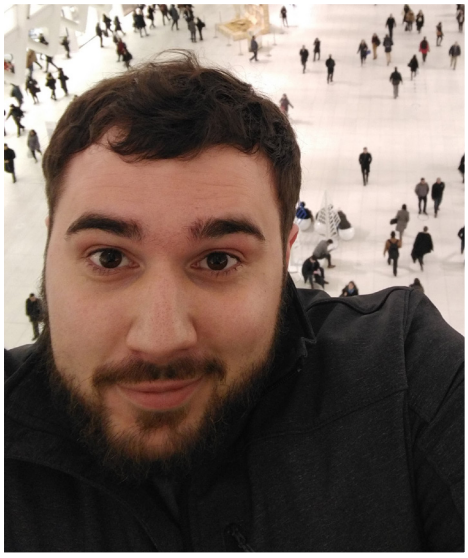
NABIG CHAUDHRY – CLASS OF 2013 –

I attended Harvard University, from which I graduated in 2017 with a Bachelor of Arts in sociology. I have been accepted into a deferred Master of Business Administration program at Harvard Business School, which I am set to begin in September 2020, and I am currently working as an associate under the Business Leadership Program at LinkedIn in San Francisco.

The Missouri Academy was instrumental in my upbringing and personal growth. Without the experiences I had there, I would not be the person I am today.

As a first-generation college student, the Missouri Academy inspired and prepared me for higher education. It did so by not only providing me with the avenues to achieve my greatest academic potential but also by surrounding me with a loving community of friends and mentors. I am truly thankful for opportunities the Missouri Academy afforded me and so many other like-minded students.

WILLIAM HARGRAVE – CLASS OF 2013



I was born and raised in Maryville. During my time at the Missouri Academy, I gravitated toward networking and computer science and uncovered a passion for design and fabrication.

I credit my time at the Missouri Academy as containing the defining experiences that put my life, both in and out of school, in perspective with the rest of the world. I remember thinking, I've worked so incredibly hard and spent so much of my conscious time pushing my limits for the sake of pushing my limits, but I've yet to define what success and fulfillment in life means to me personally. It was through this internal dialogue that I realized I did not have to wait to realize the benefits and advantages I'd acquired through my time at the Missouri Academy.

After graduating from the Academy, and at the recommendation of my commencement speaker, I purposefully took the scenic route in completing my Bachelor of Science in computer science. The resulting five internships, art classes, professional and social organizations, fraternity events, relationships, pet projects and travels were pivotal in deciding the shape and composition of my life after college. The Missouri Academy was a major contributor in enabling me to maximize my experiences while at a university that guided me into the life I have today.

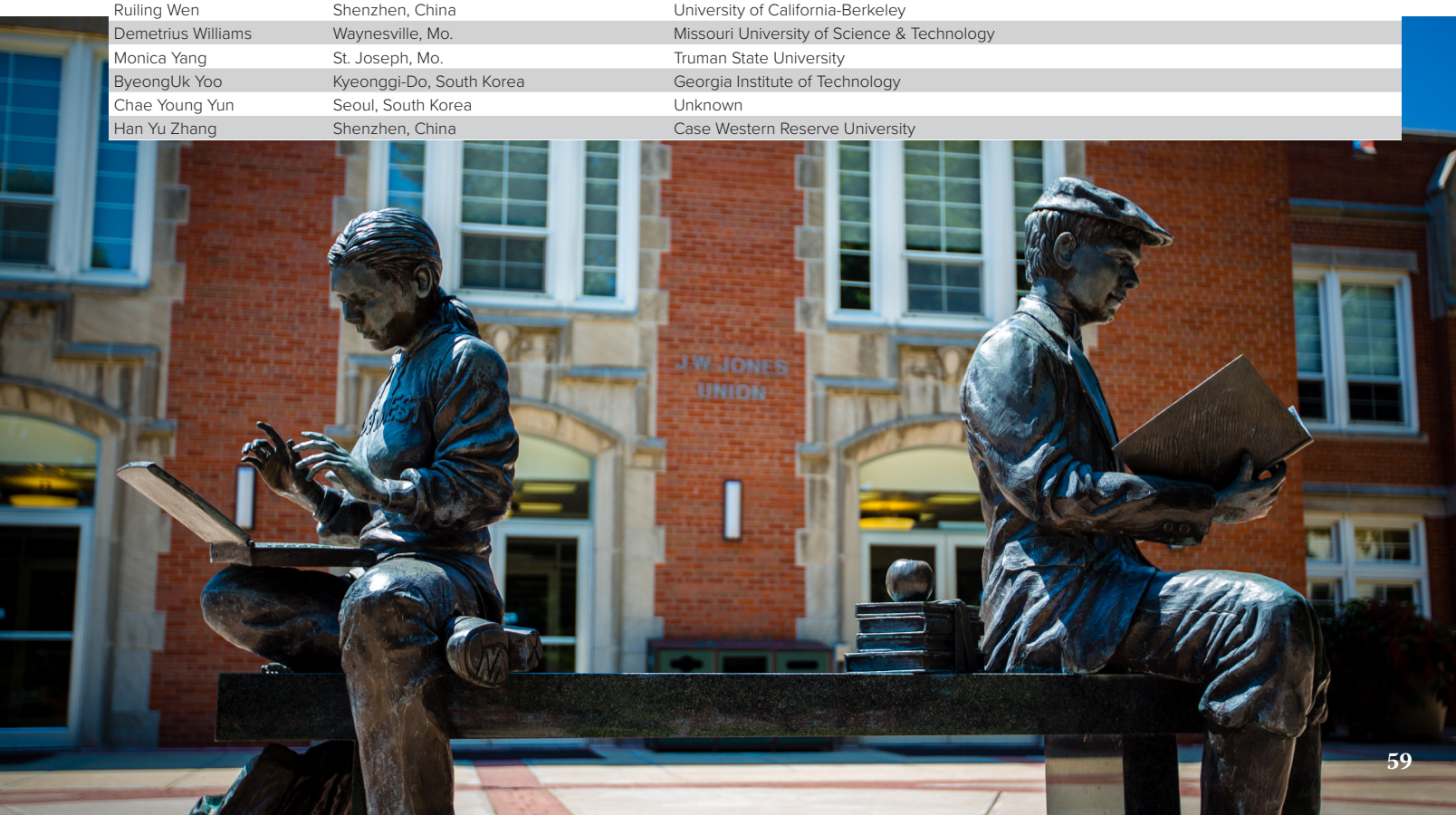
I am employed as a Network Engineer for American Century Investments (ACI), the prestigious Kansas City financial institution that is majority owned by the Stowers Institute for Medical Research (SIMR). The unique corporate ownership model of ACI means that the profits generated by the institution are provided directly to SIMR to fund their research of cures for gene-based diseases. I am extremely proud to have started my career at a company that has provided more than a billion dollars of medical research funding while continuing to innovate technologically in the financial sector.

Working for American Century Investments also provides me the opportunity to travel on business, the occasional opportunity to work from home and the freedom to develop network automation and internet architecture projects that deepen my understanding of internet technologies. I am in the second year of my career at American Century Investments and am saving with the goal of returning to school for a graduate degree in telecommunications and computer networking, while still maintaining my career.

If I could share one phrase with all the graduates here today, it would be a mashup of my two favorite sayings, "It's important to remember that for all situations in life: This too shall pass… but the BEST is yet to be."

CLASS OF 2014: TREKKERS

Name	Hometown	University attended immediately after graduating from Missouri Academy
Anna Bowden	Mountain View, Mo.	Truman State University
Yujin Cha	InCheon, South Korea	University of Rhode Island
E Jun Chang	Ulsan, South Korea	University of California-Los Angeles
Lvxiao Chen	Wuhan, China	University of California-Berkeley
William Chlanda	Joplin, Mo.	Saint Louis University
Jin Woo Choi	Seoul, South Korea	Korea Advanced Institute of Science & Technology
Monica Cossich	Jefferson City, Mo.	Missouri State University
Claire Crossnoe	Jefferson City, Mo.	Trinity University
Rebecca Dolph	St. Charles, Mo.	University of Missouri-Saint Louis
Matthew Fennell	St. Charles, Mo.	Northwest Missouri State University
Asier Galvan Sotelo	Pontevedra, Spain	Iowa State University
Xinyao Huang	Guizhou, China	University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign
HongSeok Jang	BukDo, South Korea	University of Rhode Island
Ha Rim Kim	Seoul, South Korea	McGill University (Canada)
Kyu Rae Kim	Seoul, South Korea	New York University
Kyu Seok Kim	Seoul, South Korea	Korea Advanced Institute of Science & Technology
Lyndsey Kirkorian	St. Robert, Mo.	Colorado State University
Jordan Kottwitz	Osceola, Mo.	University of Missouri-Kansas City
Jiayuan Li	Guangzhou, China	Pepperdine University
Wanjia Li	Beijing, China	University of Washington
Rose Marinaro	St. Louis, Mo.	University of Oklahoma
Sarah Medina	Springfield, Mo.	Truman State University
Sarah Minkler	Arnold, Mo.	Cornell University
Sean Nemetz	Waynesville, Mo.	University of Missouri-Kansas City
JaeWhan Park	Seoul, South Korea	Johns Hopkins University
Joon Woo Park	Seoul, South Korea	University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign
Matthew Peek	Saint Joseph, Mo.	University of Missouri-Columbia
Tristin Schwartze	Barnett, Mo.	SUNY University of Albany
Shipra Singh	St. Charles, Mo.	University of Missouri-Kansas City
Tasha Stackhouse	Holden, Mo.	MidAmerica Nazarene University
Kimberly Sternberg	King City, Mo.	Rochester Institute of Technology
Tyler Stodden	Ozark, Mo.	University of Missouri-Columbia
Yimeng Sun	Beijing, China	University of Washington-Seattle
Dustin Tanksley	Branson, Mo.	Missouri University of Science & Technology
Cher-Xa Thao	Stark City, Mo.	Northwest Missouri State University
Abigail Wampler	Savannah, Mo.	Northwest Missouri State University
Junyu Wang	Beijing, China	Missouri University of Science & Technology
Matthew Wedewer	St. Charles, Mo.	Missouri University of Science & Technology
Ruiling Wen	Shenzhen, China	University of California-Berkeley
Demetrius Williams	Waynesville, Mo.	Missouri University of Science & Technology
Monica Yang	St. Joseph, Mo.	Truman State University
ByeongUk Yoo	Kyeonggi-Do, South Korea	Georgia Institute of Technology
Chae Young Yun	Seoul, South Korea	Unknown
Han Yu Zhang	Shenzhen, China	Case Western Reserve University



SHIPRA SINGH – CLASS OF 2014 –

I am a fourth year medical student at the University of Missouri-Kansas City School of Medicine (UMKC SOM) combined six year B.A/M.D program, and my anticipated graduation date is May 2020. Without the support of the Missouri Academy, I would not be where I am today. In high school, I was an average over-achieving student. Teachers would use my essays as examples in their lessons; I took honors classes and due to the padded 5.0 GPA scale, my grades looked stellar, but I was bored. When I went to the Missouri Academy, I was exposed to people from all over Missouri and the world. Seoul, Jefferson City, Mountain View would have remained signs to read on a highway or places on a map that I had no hope of ever visiting. Now, these places are the homes of my dearest friends whom I would never have met without my time at the Missouri Academy.

I call the Missouri Academy my "golden opportunity." I have no doubt that I would not have entered medical school at age 18 without the education that the Missouri Academy afforded me. I met new people, challenged myself with courses in calculus, bioethics, microbiology and classical physics. I learned how to carry myself when speaking to people who thought that, because of my age, I would be immature. I learned how to listen when someone was hurting. I learned what it meant to be a friend and how to ask for help. During my time at the Missouri Academy, I participated in cancer research, volunteered at a nursing home, wired electrical circuits into a robot and, most importantly, learned how to be someone of value to my community. I gained a confidence that I never knew I had. The support I received from the Missouri Academy and the plethora of opportunities that became

TYLER STODDEN – CLASS OF 2014 –

I went on to attend the University of Missouri-Columbia, graduating Summa Cum Laude with a Bachelor of Science in biological engineering in 2016. The Missouri Academy has been a major contributing factor to my academic success at the University of Missouri-Columbia and beyond.

After graduating from the University of Missouri, I moved to Washington, D.C. to accept a position as a post-baccalaureate IRTA fellow at the National Institutes of Health (NIH). At NIH, I work in the Laboratory of Neuroimaging (LNI) under Dr. Nora Volkow, chief of LNI and director of the National Institute on Drug Abuse. LNI uses brain imaging (PET and MRI) to study the neurocircuitry that underlies the rewarding effects of drugs of abuse. Specifically, I work directly under Dr. Sung Won Kim, who serves as the chief radiochemist of LNI, developing novel PET radiotracers and testing them in preclinical animal models.

I am applying to medical schools and hope to matriculate in August 2019. At the Missouri Academy, I served as freshman class president in the Student Senate and president of the Student Government Association. During my time at Mizzou, I continued to serve as a senator in the Missouri Students Association. These experiences have inspired me to pursue a career with research aimed at improving public health and healthcare systems while still maintaining a robust career as a clinician.

The Missouri Academy set me on a path that made it possible for me to be working in a world-class institution like NIH with pioneers of the disease model of addiction. I strongly believe I would not be in the position I am today had it not been for the Missouri Academy. Not only did the Missouri Academy provide me with an excellent education, but it also gave me many strong friendships with brilliant individuals that I continue to hold to this day, and for that I am very thankful.

available to me was unparalleled.

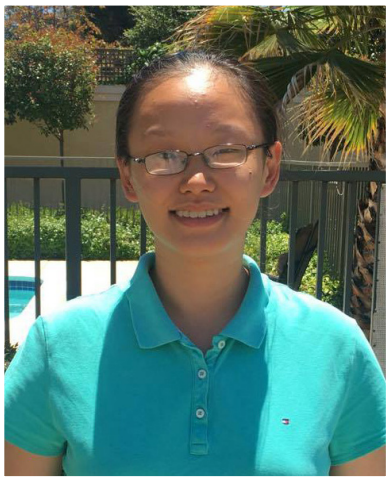
Places like these are the solution to education in a global world and Missouri is a special place because of the Missouri Academy. To be honest, without the Missouri Academy, I would have graduated from my high school in Saint Charles and moved away from Missouri to seek greener pastures. Now, my goal is to use the discipline and hard work ethic I garnered at the Missouri Academy to do what I can to improve healthcare, particularly in Missouri. During my time at UMKC SOM, I have been involved in various organizations, including helping to run a free health clinic for Kansas City's underserved population, promoting medical student mental health through UMKC's Wellness Council, receiving the Sarah Morrison Student Research Award for my basic science research in genetics and bioinformatics, and doing clinical research in fetal and maternal health. I owe whatever small successes I picked up along the way to my family who encouraged me to apply to the Missouri Academy and then to the Missouri Academy itself for building the foundation with which I hope to make my small mark on the world.

HANYU (ALICE) ZHANG – CLASS OF 2014 –

I am pursuing a bachelor's degree in engineering physics and a master's degree in material science at Case Western Reserve University.

Prior to attending the Missouri Academy and meeting Dr. Cleo, I had a vague goal for life: to do some sort of science. I didn't know what this entailed or how to accomplish this. During my junior and senior years of high school, Dr Cleo instructed me through my college application process, helped me choose a university that turned out to be a very good fit for me and taught me a lot of the basic ethics that some of my current college classmates never formally learned. Although seemingly small, being able to get into and attend Case Western with those ethics skills provided me with a solid foundation.

After graduating from the Missouri Academy, I enrolled in Case Western Reserve University as a freshman with sophomore status. Since I came into Case knowing I wanted to do physics, I attended an open house as a first-year and decided I wanted to major in engineering physics. After meeting my professors and getting on their good sides — skills you learn from the Missouri Academy – I proceeded to bug a lot of them about minors and other coursework-related stuff. During these past couple of years, I picked up two minors in mathematics and materials science and got into the Bachelor of Science/Master of Science program in material science at Case. Now I'm an undergrad senior that's also in her first year of grad school.



The research I'm doing is in computational materials physics, which uses physical principles to predict and verify certain materials properties through computational simulations. I started working with my advisor roughly a year and a half ago and recently started putting in significant amounts of time into the project. I have talked with professors from three different departments just trying to figure out what to do and the theory behind what I'm trying to do. I really like the project and I think I click fairly well with my advisor. I also got involved in a lot of clubs: Rocket Team, Robotics, Math Club, Physics and Astronomy club, and origami club. I'm the most experienced member in Rocket team and Robotics at this point. I also joined Tau Beta Pi, the engineering honor society, and Pi Mu Epsilon, the mathematics honor society and made lot of like-minded friends. I was PR for Rocket Team last school year and am a subteam lead for robotics. I've also picked up an exec position with Tau Beta Pi and have organized an event for our chapter through nationals.

I have no idea what my plans are past graduation with my master's. I've been trying to keep my options open. I know I want to do something on the practical side of physics and theoretical side of engineering.

CLASS OF 2015: TRENDSETTERS

Name	Hometown	University attended immediately after graduating from Missouri Academy
Racheal Amelung	Arnold, Mo.	Saint Louis University
Kaylyn Bradshaw	Marshfield, Mo.	Missouri State University
Caleb Brown	Festus, Mo.	Saint Louis University
Gwynndolynne Buster	Hannibal, Mo.	State University of New York at Oswego
Joseph Chandler	Stover, Mo.	University of Missouri-Columbia
Ryan Collier	Maryville, Mo.	US Military Academy at West Point
Daniel Dominguez	Panama City, Panama	University of Illinois at Urbana–Champaign
William Fries	Smithville, Mo.	Truman State University
Jacob Gordon	St. Charles, Mo.	Missouri University of Science & Technology
Justin Hofer	O'Fallon, Mo.	University of Missouri-Columbia
Lorden Hoff	Joplin, Mo.	University of Iowa
Xiaojing Huang	Shenzhen, China	University of Rochester
YongHuai Huang	Guangzhou, China	Pennsylvania State University
Hyoun Hyoung Jang	Kyeonggi-Do, South Korea	University of Illinois at Urbana–Champaign
Heemoon Jeong	Gyunggi-Do, South Korea	Korean Advanced Institute of Science & Technology
Andrew Kaiser	Leslie, Mo.	Missouri University of Science & Technology
HyunJun Kim	Busan, South Korea	Johns Hopkins University
Min Soo Kim	Seoul, South Korea	Georgia Institute of Technology
Yeonji Kim	Daejon, South Korea	University of Rhode Island
Kyungchan Koh	Kyunggido, South Korea	Rice University
MinSeok Koo	Seoul, South Korea	University of Pittsburgh
Je Yun Lee	Seoul, South Korea	University of Illinois at Urbana–Champaign
Seung Hyun Lee	Gyeonggi-do, South Korea	Duke University
Jinning Liu	Shenzhen, China	University of Illinois at Urbana–Champaign
Carter Lloyd	Kearney, Mo.	Missouri University of Science & Technology
Marilyn Maize	Hannibal, Mo.	Hannibal LaGrange University
Andrew McCullough	Raymore, Mo.	Missouri University of Science & Technology
Patrick Miles	Hannibal, Mo.	University of Missouri-Columbia
Kaitlin Moore	Buckner, Mo.	Cornell University
HyunSu Park	Seoul, South Korea	Georgia Institute of Technology
Jae Hyun Park	Seoul, South Korea	The Cooper Union for the Advancement of Science & Art
Min Woo Park	Seoul, South Korea	Pennsylvania State University
Wenyue Qiu	Beijing, China	School of Art Institute of Chicago
Haroon Rahaman	Brentwood, Mo.	Saint Louis University
Austin Roberts	St. Charles, Mo.	Missouri University of Science & Technology
Kele Shi	Shenzhen, China	Missouri University of Science & Technology
Dorian Simmons	Webb City, Mo.	Missouri Southern State University
Torria Slagle	Savannah, Mo.	Northwest Missouri State University
Linden Stucky	Oregon, Mo.	University of Kansas
Mariah Teague	Kearney, Mo.	North Carolina State University
Adrian Tygart	Highlandville, Mo.	Rochester Institute of Technology
Lucas Walker	Houston, Mo.	Missouri University of Science & Technology
Yuhao Wen	Shenzhen, China	Missouri University of Science & Technology
Jackson White	Lawson, Mo.	University of Missouri-Columbia
Nan Wu	Shenzhen, China	University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign
Zhuocheng Ye	Shenzhen, China	University of California-Davis
Jee Haeng Yoo	Gyeonggi-do, South Korea	University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign
Yixiao Zhang	Beijing, China	Cornell University
Zhiyu Zheng	Beijing, China	University of Nevada Las Vegas

ANDREW KAISER – CLASS OF 2015

I grew up and went to school in Union, Missouri, before coming to the Missouri Academy. My two siblings also attended the Missouri Academy. My older sister Emmy graduated in 2013, and my younger brother Daniel graduated with the class of 2018. Since leaving the Missouri Academy, I have been attending Missouri University of Science and Technology, and majoring in chemical engineering. I will graduate from Missouri S&T in May 2018.

During my time at Missouri S&T, I have worked as a math and chemistry tutor and enjoy helping my fellow students work to achieve their academic goals. While I do not have any firm plans for after graduation, I plan to work for a few years before attending graduate school. In my free time, I like to read fiction and spend time outdoors.

KELE SHI – CLASS OF 2015

I am studying at the Missouri University of Science and Technology, doing a double-major in electrical engineering and computer engineering. I will graduate in December 2018 and plan to go on to graduate school.

I would not really call myself "successful," but I am one of the survivors. My experience at the Missouri Academy was quite different because I didn't attend traditional high-school in the U.S., so I cannot make comparisons. However, I can compare it to my current university.

I found I met some of my best friends at the Missouri Academy. For me it is special and hard to describe in words. When I came to the U.S., there was a language barrier, cultural shock and other difficulties. However, I made a lot of friends and they helped me through, and the bonds are still strong after graduating. First, I want to say thank you to all the staff members. I made a lot of mistakes at the Missouri Academy, and they were always nice and tolerant.

At Missouri S&T, I made some new friends, but none of them nearly as close to me as those friends I had at the Missouri Academy. Drew McCullough (Class of 2015) was my roommate in my second year at Missouri S&T and will be forever in my heart since he passed away in October 2017. Dustin Tanksley (Class of 2014) is a Ph.D. student at Missouri S&T. We always talk about artificial intelligence and I have learned a lot from him. Ken Wen (Class of 2015) and Jerry Wang (Class of 2014) are two of my closest friends at Missouri S&T.

Since my Missouri Academy graduation I was really into Boeing at the beginning and picked aerospace as my major but later realized that citizenship and clearance would be problematic for me. So I am planning to be an electrical and computer engineer. I have done two internships in different companies in China.

In the meantime, other than taking classes and getting ready for graduation, I am doing research in artificial intelligence, specifically making a neural network for backgammon (optimal doubling decision). What's more, I worked part time for IT Infrastructure in S&T. Messing with computers is always a fun thing to me. I plan to go to graduate school, in either network security or artificial intelligence.

CLASS OF 2016: INNOVATORS

Name	Hometown	University attended immediately after graduating from Missouri Academy
Gavin Albrecht	Trenton, Mo.	University of Missouri-Columbia
Jesse Alford	Huntsville, Mo.	Northwest Missouri State University
Claire Ames	Marshfield, Mo.	Truman State University
Brionna Bennett	Centralia, Mo.	University of Missouri-Kansas City
Nathan Bowman	Trimble, Mo.	Missouri University of Science & Technology
Katherine Burrows	Blue Springs, Mo.	George Washington University
Mingzu Cai	Shenzhen, China	Unknown
Victoria Carothers	Clarence, Mo.	Truman State University
Eonho Chang	Gyeongsangnam-do, South Korea	University of California-Santa Cruz
Duncan Chappell	Indianola, IA	Missouri University of Science & Technology
Xinyue Chen	Guangzhou, China	University of California-San Diego
ZiTong Chen	Guangzhou, China	University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign
JinWoo Choi	Seoul, South Korea	Brown University
Zacary Crismaru	Huntsville, Mo.	University of Missouri-Columbia
Ana Davis	Blue Springs, Mo.	La Sierra University
HuiXun Du	Shenzhen, China	University of California-Irvine
Jisu Eo	Gyeonggi-do, South Korea	Northeastern University
Ryan Frazee	Independence, Mo.	University of Kansas
Brianna Haberyan	St. Joseph, Mo.	University of Nebraska-Lincoln
Euisuk Han	Seoul, South Korea	Unknown
Suxiang Han	Shenzhen, China	University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign
Kate Heimonen	LaGrange, Mo.	University of Kansas
Natalie Holl	Lone Jack, Mo.	Missouri University of Science & Technology
Jizhou Huang	Shenzhen, China	Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute
Yingming Huang	Guangzhou, China	Purdue University
Juyeong Ihm	Seoul, South Korea	University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign
Gi Ahn Jung	Cheonan-si, South Korea	University of California-Berkeley
Matilynn Kester	Valles Mines, Mo.	University of California-Los Angeles
Chan-Young Kim	Gyeonggi-do, South Korea	Purdue University
JiHyun Kim	Busan, South Korea	University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign
Min Su Kim	Gyeonggi-do, South Korea	University of Rhode Island
Heather Lange	Jefferon City, Mo.	University of Missouri-Saint Louis
Yurim Lee	Seoul, South Korea	University of California-Santa Barbara
Walker Lehman	St. Louis, Mo.	Missouri University of Science & Technology
Katherine Lewis	Helena, Mo.	Creighton University
Qianyi Li	Shenzhen, China	University of Rochester
Shuyan Li	Shenzhen, China	Grinnell College
Li Ma	Shenzhen, China	University of California-Davis
Yiming Ma	Shenzhen, China	University of California-Davis
Marissa Matos	Knob Noster, Mo.	University of Missouri-Columbia
Alexander Matthes	Cedar Hill, Mo.	Missouri University of Science & Technology
SeoHyoung Moon	Seoul, South Korea	University of California-San Diego
Mary Grace Mundy	Hollister, Mo.	Missouri State University
SeungHyun Nam	Seoul, South Korea	Boston College
Emerald Newton	Lee's Summit, Mo.	University of Pittsburgh
Sabrina Olson	Maryville, Mo.	University of Michigan
Jay Patel	Clinton, Mo.	Hamilton College
Emilio Perez	Platte City, Mo.	Missouri University of Science & Technology
Autumn Perkins	St. Clair, Mo.	Maryville University in Saint Louis
Meng Yuan Qi	Dezhou, China	Purdue University
Jeremiah Queen	Warrenton, Mo.	University of Missouri-Kansas City
Deanna Rigdon	Odessa, Mo.	Arkansas State University
Chae Won Ryu	Seoul, South Korea	University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign
Hannah Salley	O'Fallon, Mo.	Missouri University of Science & Technology
Eleanor Schuey	Cherryville, Mo.	Missouri University of Science & Technology
Dameon Sheets	Lone Jack, Mo.	Missouri University of Science & Technology
Heejae Shim	Seoul, South Korea	University of California-Berkeley
Yingqi Song	Shenzhen, China	Fordham University
Emily Stone	Fulton, Mo.	Saint Louis College of Pharmacy
Sang Weon Suh	Chungcheonnam-Do, South Korea	Case Western Reserve University
Katarina Truber	O'Fallon, Mo.	Saint Louis University
MacKenzie True	Platte City, Mo.	Clemson University
Justin Turner	Lone Jack, Mo.	Georgia Institute of Technology
Jamie Wise	Wentzville, Mo.	The Ohio State University
Jingqi Yang	Huangpi, China	University of Washington-Seattle
Amy Yocks	Wentzville, Mo.	University of Missouri-Columbia
Chunzi Zhang	Shenzhen, China	University of Chicago

EMERALD NEWTON – CLASS OF 2016 –

I am from Lee's Summit, Missouri, and attended Blue Springs South High School. I participated in athletics as a part of both the basketball and track and field teams. Having known that academics were my strong suit from childhood, it was easy for me to take the Missouri Academy up on an offer of going to college as a high school junior. Bright eyed and bushy tailed, I came to the Missouri Academy looking to make something of myself and be involved in a way I hadn't been in high school. I went on to become a Community Leader (CL) as well as the co-president of Community Service Club, founder and president of Health Occupations Students of America (HOSA) and the director of Second Year Experience with Student Government Association (SGA). To say the least, I was involved. But if you were to ask me about my time at Missouri Academy, I wouldn't speak of my titles and duties but of the amazing people I got to live and grow with, the relationships that were built between me, my peers and the staff. I would say, although those were some of the hardest years of my life, they were also the happiest.

After graduating from the Missouri Academy, I chose to stay and continue my education at Northwest Missouri State University, where I major in chemistry with a medicinal emphasis with a pre-med track. Over the past two years I have been working hard to graduate with my Bachelor of Science in spring 2018. During my years as a "traditional student" I continue being involved on the campus, as I am a member of Gamma Sigma Epsilon chemistry honor society, National Residential Hall Honorary, and Vice President's Advisement Council. I am also a residential assistant in Roberta Hall and the co-founder and president of Spirit & Truth Gospel Choir. I plan to take some time off to experience the work world before heading to medical school. I dream of being a physician who is an advocate for those without a voice and work to change the ever-present health disparities in this country. As for now, I am steadily working hard to leave an impact on people in the same way the Missouri Academy left such a positive impact on me.

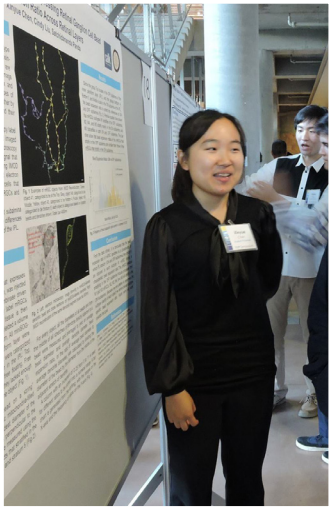
JAMIE WISE – CLASS OF 2016 –

The Missouri Academy provided me with the rigorous educational background and leadership experience I needed to be selected for an Eminence Fellowship at The Ohio State University, where I am earning a degree in international relations and sociology, with a minor in Arabic, and will graduate in spring 2020.

Going to the Missouri Academy allowed me to explore my passion for international affairs while still in high school. Not only did the Missouri Academy cultivate an environment of diversity and multiculturalism, but it gave me the opportunity to take my first class on international relations. It was there that I learned about a small East African country called Rwanda and the atrocities that occurred there in 1994. The experience sparked my interest in international conflict resolution and sustainable peace. Little did I know I would travel to Rwanda not a year later on a study abroad trip to conduct research on genocide and restorative justice. I am authoring an academic paper focusing on how culturally-specific factors can be integrated into transitional justice mechanisms to improve their capacity to foster peace and security after mass violence. Social sciences research has been the cornerstone of my experience at Ohio State, and it was through my STEM background at the Missouri Academy that I gained the analytical skills I needed to succeed in original inquiry.

Today, I spend my time as a virtual intern for the U.S. Embassy in South Sudan, covering issues on human rights and civil war, and as a mentor for Refuge, a student organization that empowers refugees and immigrants to strive for higher education. My future plans include studying abroad for a semester in Jordan, writing an undergraduate thesis about refugee perspectives on the Syrian Civil War, and pursuing graduate studies in national security policy. My time at the Missouri Academy nurtured my ambitions and prepared me to dream of a world made better by Innovators.

XINYUE CHEN – CLASS OF 2016 –



I am a junior at University of California, San Diego, majoring in neuroscience and physiology. I work in circadian rhythm-related research in the Salk Institute, one of the best research places in the world. I love my research and the academic vibe and plan to attend graduate school at UCSD to continue my current research project about melanopsin retinal ganglion cells.

Throughout my two years in the Missouri Academy, I encountered many people who listened to me patiently and tried their best to help me. I remembered that every week we had a seminar, which required us to share our life and thoughts with our residential counselors. My residential counselor was my dearest and most patient listener for the full two years, besides my parents. They were always responsive and considerate when I dropped my tears due to homesickness and when I discussed with them my new thoughts on different topics.

Missouri Academy was my first home in the U.S., and it is my station transiting me on a new stage of growth. Every single professor I met there was my mentor. I used to badger my professors with numerous questions during office hours every week, especially for literature, history and politics – subjects in which I was weak. Many professors jokingly called me a "problematic" girl due to my endless curiosity, but they always helped me with full passion, patience and respect. Because of these professors, I explored and fell in love with both science and humanity.

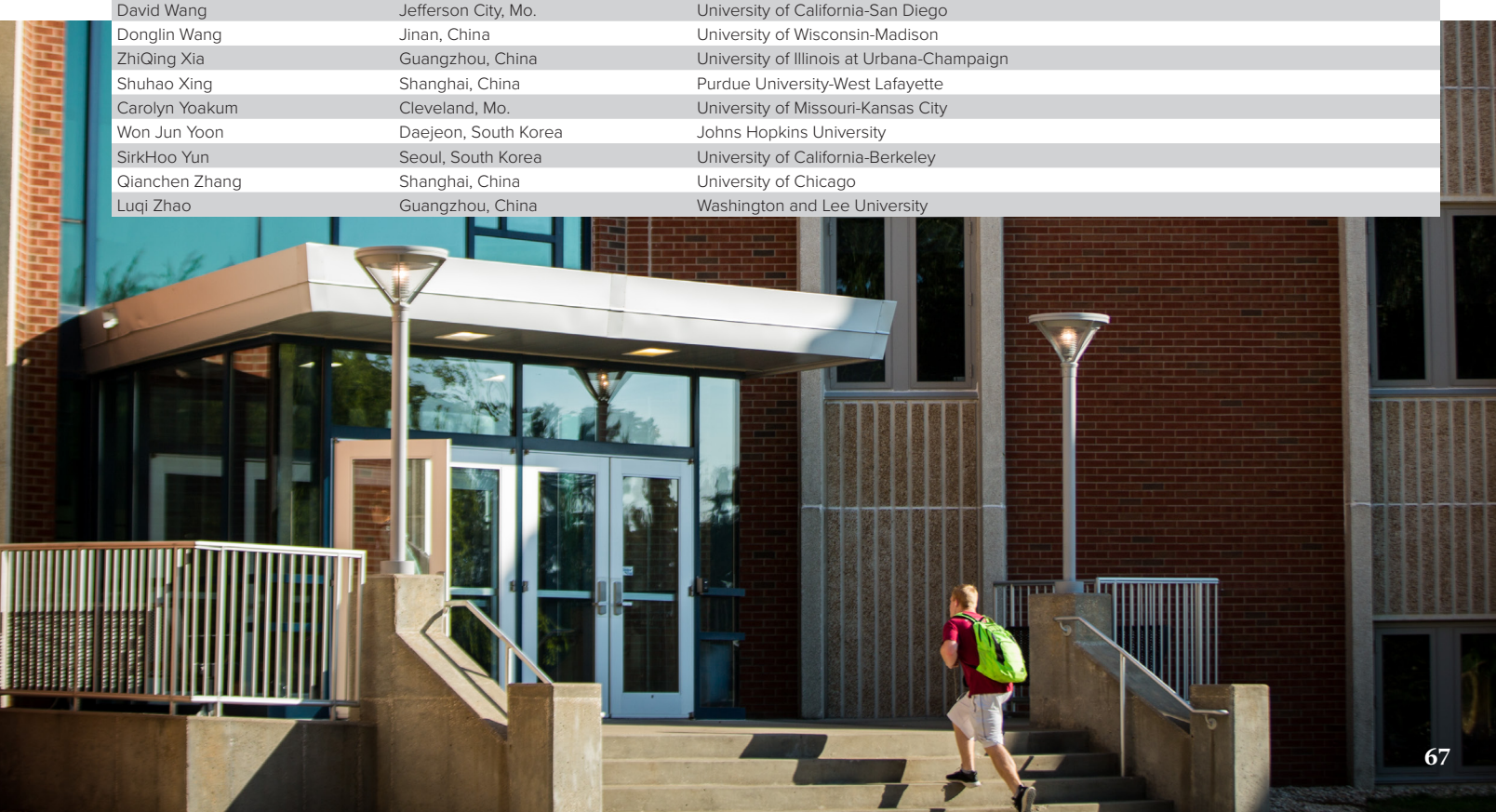
In these two years, I also established my sense of belonging by being a community leader, a vice president of the Science Olympiad team, and opened my heart to our lovely staff and friends in Missouri Academy, who guided me and helped me through those years. The sense of home led me to establish good habits on exercising during these two years; I even found someone to train me professionally on aerobic and anaerobic exercise, and I ran weekly across the campus for a few miles. Now I just got my Basic Hatha Yoga Instructor certificate from the Society of Asian Yoga, and I swim and jog on a weekly basis.

Because of the Missouri Academy, I have grown to be independent and happy. It is there that I developed lots of deep internal thoughts and reflection and came to know more about myself. Before I left, my literature professor sent me a Greek poem "Ithaka" for farewell. I would like to share my favorite sentences:

> "And if you find her poor, Ithaca has not deceived you.
>
> Wise as you have become with so much experience.
>
> You must already have understood what these Ithacas mean."

CLASS OF 2017: CHALLENGERS

Name	Hometown	University attended immediately after graduating from Missouri Academy
Elsie Barry	St. Joseph, Mo.	University of Pittsburgh
Rachel Brumett	Maryville, Mo.	Baylor University
Enrico Calvanese	Panama City, Panama	Franklin & Marshall College
Cao,Ruidi Cao	Changsha, China	Massachusetts Institute of Technology
Ruixin Cao	Foshan, China	School of Art Institute of Chicago
Anzumaan Chakraborty	Maryville, Mo.	Missouri University of Science & Technology
Xuanhui Chen	Guangzhou, China	University of Washington-Seattle
Yifei Chen	Guangzhou, China	University of Washington-Seattle
Haowei Cheng	Shenzhen, China	New York University
Matthew Cootes	Hornersville, Mo.	Carthage College
Alison Davis	St. James, Mo.	Missouri University of Science & Technology
Virginia Dike	Centerville, Mo.	University of Missouri-Kansas City
Courtney Dimitt	Nixa, Mo.	Truman State University
Michael Doerge	St. Charles, Mo.	Washington University-Saint Louis
Katherine English	Springfield, Mo.	Jacobs University Bremen
Yucheng Fan	Guangzhou, Mo.	University of California-Davis
Gordon Fang	Blue Springs, Mo.	New York University
Benjamin Garver	Kansas City, Mo.	Missouri University of Science & Technology
Ele Hanson	O'Fallon, Mo.	Missouri University of Science & Technology
Caleb Holland	St. Louis, Mo.	Northwestern University
Jacob Horton	Republic, Mo.	University of Colorado-Denver
Zixiao Huang	Shenzhen, China	University of Washington-Seattle
Irene Hung	Maryville, Mo.	Cornell University
Vanessa Jeffries	Centralia, Mo.	Truman State University
Ruiyang Jin	Shenzhen, China	Taking gap year
JaeWoo Kim	Seong-NamSi, South Korea	University of California-Los Angeles
SeongJun Kim	Shenzhen, China	Johns Hopkins University
Heehoon Lee	Seong-NamSi, South Korea	University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign
Jiwoo Lee	Seong-NamSi, South Korea	Northwestern University
JiYoon Lee	Busan, South Korea	University of California-Berkeley
Sunmin Lee	Uijeongbu, South Korea	Purdue University
Qiming Li	Guangzhou, China	University of California-Davis
Paige Linneman	Columbia, Mo.	University of Missouri-Columbia
Ye Luo	Shenzhen, China	University of Maryland-College Park
Kaleb McMillen	Springfield, Mo.	Missouri University of Science & Technology
Xuan Nie	Guangzhou, China	New York University
Randall Porter	Bowling Green, Mo.	Northwest Missouri State University
Som Singh	Saint Charles, Mo.	University of Missouri-Kansas City
Boheng Wang	Jinan, China	University of Colorado-Boulder
David Wang	Jefferson City, Mo.	University of California-San Diego
Donglin Wang	Jinan, China	University of Wisconsin-Madison
ZhiQing Xia	Guangzhou, China	University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign
Shuhao Xing	Shanghai, China	Purdue University-West Lafayette
Carolyn Yoakum	Cleveland, Mo.	University of Missouri-Kansas City
Won Jun Yoon	Daejeon, South Korea	Johns Hopkins University
SirkHoo Yun	Seoul, South Korea	University of California-Berkeley
Qianchen Zhang	Shanghai, China	University of Chicago
Luqi Zhao	Guangzhou, China	Washington and Lee University



VIRGINIA DIKE – CLASS OF 2017 –

I am continuing my education at the University of Missouri in Kansas City (UMKC). After completion of the six-year medical school program, the year of 2023 will mark my graduation with an M.D. and a Bachelor of Arts in biology. For these achievements, I thank the Missouri Academy.

Stepping out from my timid behavior, I have ridden an ambulance at Johnson County Ambulance District (JCAD) for more than 100 hours as the paramedic permitted me to take vitals and communicate with patients. Speaking with paramedics, emergency medical technicians (EMTs), and other first responders, I further developed an education in medicine as I shadowed these healthcare professionals and became firmer in my desire for pursuing medicine. I thank the supervisors at the Missouri Academy who informed my ignorant self of the concept of "shadowing."

A simple talk with a professor at Northwest Missouri State University set off a chain of steps that led to my enrolled status of receiving the education and licensing of an emergency medical responder (EMR) at Nodaway County Ambulance District (NCAD). Undergoing simulations of supposed cardiac patients and hands-on use of the ambulance equipment, making splints and attempting to stop bleeding, I realized some fun to have in medicine. For this, I thank the professors at the university that housed our Missouri Academy and whose commitment to us seemed

ELE HANSON – CLASS OF 2017 –

Prior to attending the Missouri Academy, I had settled. I was settled with my boring high school classes, my small friend group that I didn't really relate to, and my small bedroom where I spent many hours alone, binge-watching Netflix. When I got into the Missouri Academy, I figured it would be like high school. I would get to know two or three people, sit in my room alone to work on homework and then follow that with some Netflix until I went to bed. However, something changed all of that. Being the generally nervous and anxious person I am, I'm not one to go make friends, I let them come to me, and the past six times I started a new school it had worked fairly well. Yet that first day, sitting in my room with my new roommate Allison, who was admittedly more nervous and anxious than I was, I dragged us out of the room and downstairs to the main lounge full of other new students. We sat there together and waited for anyone, just any person that would make friends with us as opposed to us making friends with them. It worked to some extent, and slowly over the course of two weeks, I started to put myself out there and got to know more people until I could put a name to every face. I expected to know maybe five people's names, but I could start a conversation with over 100 people after just one month. I could relate to all of these other teenagers in one way or another, and to me that was shocking.

Fast forward one year to the start of my second year at the Missouri Academy. I have an executive position in my favorite club, I'm a community leader, and I'm becoming more active in things such as community service and easy-going clubs like Prom and Dance. I have a confidence I never thought possible and I am myself around all of the new students, well aware that we already share so many things in common. I already feel like a completely different person than I was one year earlier. The Missouri Academy gave me a sort of confidence that I didn't think I had within myself. It made me feel comfortable expressing myself and put me through tough life challenges that I wouldn't know how to handle outside of an environment like that. The Missouri Academy truly prepared me for the outside world both academically and socially.

Today, I am the service chairman for the Eta Theta chapter of Zeta Tau Alpha, the fundraising chairman for Chem-E-Car at Missouri S&T, and a member of the Lady Miner Threat Frisbee Team at Missouri S&T. I am more socially active than ever before and am going after more opportunities to involve myself on campus. What I expected to be a quiet, lonely college experience just four years ago is actually a fulfilling and enriched college life that I never would have had the confidence to go after without attending the Missouri Academy. I am also doing well academically, maintaining a high GPA that I established at the Missouri Academy.

My mother said, before I moved into my dorm room, that her reason for sending me to the Missouri Academy was to help me grow socially, and at the time I brushed that off thinking that the only reason I was going was for better academic opportunities. Now I know that she was right. While I got the challenge I wanted on the academic side of things, she got to see me grow as a person, have new experiences, and come out of the shell that I had been hiding within for so long. So, while my success story isn't about what great job I have or how much money I make, to my mom, I achieved the greatest success of them all.

prevalent throughout any arduous time.

To recall a prime example of my development, I nervously applied to become the biology tutor while at the Missouri Academy and was placed in charge of helping my younger quick-witted classmates from the Class of 2018, a feat that clawed out my shyness. Dealing with the students, I soon found that each of them required certain needs. Some really needed a tutor, to which I hoped I was able to fulfill, while others needed support as they experienced the same lack of confidence I did. To my classmates and my thorough biology professors, I thank you.

Throughout the good and bad, as the grade I had worked so hard for was made compared to the time I felt utterly alone and down and sure I could never graduate, I thank the support and counseling of the Missouri Academy to bring me back around and try another day.

I stood as a ninth grade high school student, receiving a letter that I had mistaken for fraud and discarded in the trash, from a place that offered such academic wonders. A place that sent little old me, a soon-to-be first-generation college student who knew nothing of the ACT, nothing of the Periodic Table, nothing of what could be achievable as I viewed my family's lot in life, the only one I could ever hope to obtain. To this change in mind and the outreaches I have made thus far, I thank those who worked behind the title of Missouri Academy and guided us to what I now see. I also thank my tireless mother and brother who scraped, skimped, and worked with the Missouri Academy to insure I could afford to graduate. And I give a large thanks to my high school principal who encouraged my committed mother to recover the letter I so thoughtlessly disposed.

SOM SINGH – CLASS OF 2017 –

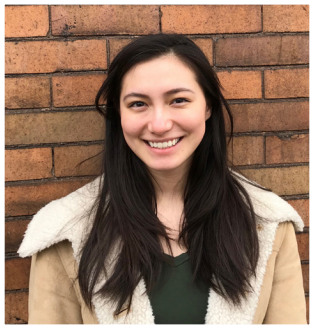
After graduation, I knew I had a lot to figure out for the rest of my life. Personally, I believe Missouri Academy graduates are much more susceptible to depression caused by life transitions than typical high schoolers because of the cushiony, protected environment we were used to in North Complex. I too, fell in that group.

When I started the UMKC six-year combined BA/MD program, like any new setting, there was a lot to process. I realized that despite everything I thought I figured out at the Missouri Academy, such as dorm life or how to study, I still had a long way to go. I remember doing badly on my very first medical school exam. However, despite failing in what I expected the Missouri Academy prepared me well for, I realized there was something else, something more than the Missouri Academy gave to me that no other school could give: the ability to accept my weaknesses and who I am. From the science test on the first day of Bridge program, to the D I earned in genetics the day before my graduation. From teenage drama and inside jokes between friends to the mentor meetings with the residential counselors – all of these were experiences that I still refer to even today. Most importantly, it's the Missouri Academy friendships that I still hold today and which have helped me throughout my time after graduating. Despite being time-zones away from each other, my friendships still make new memes and memories.

I am the youngest president of my medical school class and actively use my small, forever-developing clinical knowledge to make a difference in the urban Kansas City area. As I scope through the medical field in my white coat and figure my way through this journey through medical school, I know the Missouri Academy gave me platforms, such as being a Community Leader or a bio tutor for the Dreamers, which fostered my belief that it takes only one person to make a difference.

Finally, I can still remember March 8, 2017. The day we had our sudden class meeting in Garrett-Strong 2550, only to find out from Northwest Missouri State University leadership that the Missouri Academy would close its operations after the end of the 2018 school year. That night in North Complex was quiet and off-routine as a result of the news. However, it was that night where I realized that though the Missouri Academy may be ending, I was proud of being part of its legacy for the rest of my life.

ELSIE BARRY – CLASS OF 2017



I was born in St. Joseph, Missouri, and attend the University of Pittsburgh as a freshman. I am majoring in neuroscience and minoring in chemistry and hope to graduate by fall 2020. I am studying to become a physician, possibly in rural medicine.

At the Missouri Academy, I was the president of Health Occupations Students of America (HOSA) and Discovering International Societies and Cultures Organization (DISCO), and I was a community leader. At the University of Pittsburgh, I am a member of the Chinese American Students Association Committee, the American Medical Student Association, and photography club.

CLASS OF 2018: DREAMERS

Name	Hometown	University attended immediately after graduating from Missouri Academy
Yang Bi	Shenzhen, China	University of California-Irvine
Paige Breyfogle	Leawood, Kan.	University of Kansas
Kara Brown	O'Fallon, Mo.	Drury University
Zoe Carpenter	O'Fallon, Mo.	University of Kansas
Zhaoyi Chen	Shenzhen, China	University of Washington-Seattle
ChangYeon Cho	Seoul, South Korea	Purdue University
Jacklyn Cook	Niangua, Mo.	Embry-Riddle Aeronautical University-Prescott
Sabrina Duffy	Saint Charles, Mo.	Saint Louis University
Barbara Dyer	Saint Joseph, Mo.	University of Missouri-Kansas City
Robert Farenholtz	Winfield, Mo.	Northwest Missouri State University
Daniel Freitas	McCool Junction, Neb.	Unknown
YuanHui Huang	Shenzhen, China	Purdue University-West Lafayette
Jacob Hughes	St. Joseph, Mo.	Northwest Missouri State University
Dong Min Hwang	Seoul, South Korea	Carnegie Mellon University
Daniel Kaiser	Leslie, Mo.	Purdue University-West Lafayette
Yoo Na Kim	Gyunggi-do, South Korea	Georgia Institute of Technology
JaeEun Lee	Seoul, South Korea	University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign
Jun Seo Lee	Gyeonggi-do, South Korea	Saint Louis University
Seyeon Lee	Seoul, South Korea	Georgia Institute of Technology
Trevor Lewis	Eureka, Mo.	Minerva Institute
Yulin Liu	Shenzhen, China	University of California-San Diego
Jacob Nyhagen	Ridgeway, Mo.	Missouri University of Science & Technology
Kyu Suk Oh	Seoul, South Korea	University of California-Berkeley
Siyuan Pan	Shenzhen, China	University of Washington-Seattle
Pearson Prael	Warrensburg, Mo.	University of Kansas
Mengzhi Qin	Shenzhen, Mo.	University of Washington-Seattle
Jie Qiu	Beijing, China	Carnegie Mellon University
Kun Ryu	Daejeon, South Korea	Georgia Institute of Technology
Seung Joon Seo	Seoul, South Korea	Nova Southeastern University
Qunyu Shen	Guangzhou, China	University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign
WooJin Shim	Seoul, South Korea	Georgia Institute of Technology
Yale Shim	Seoul, South Korea	Ohio Northern University
Sophia Southard	Cleveland, Mo.	University of Kansas
Brittany Stickman	Hollister, Mo.	Missouri State University
Siyun Tan	Shenzhen, China	University of Wisconsin-Madison
Haiyan Tian	Guangzhou, China	University of Wisconsin-Madison
Ava Urhahn	Cape Girardeau, Mo.	Colorado State University
Fuechai Vang	Grandview, Mo.	University of Minnesota-Twin Cities
Sidney Walters	Pleasant Hill, Mo.	Embry-Riddle Aeronautical University
Xuan Wang	Guangzhou, China	University of Washington-Seattle
James Washington	Grandview, Mo.	Morehouse College
Yichen Weng	Shanghai, China	Boston College
Ziru Xu	Shenzhen, China	University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign
Eabryana Zeller	Columbia, Mo.	University of Southern California
Ruida Zeng	Guangzhou, China	Vanderbilt University
Jiayu Zhan	Guangzhou, China	University of Minnesota-Twin Cities
Jin Yan Zhu	Shenzhen, China	University of Iowa

ROBERT FAHRENHOLTZ – CLASS OF 2018 –

After graduating in May 2018 as a part of the final class of the Missouri Academy, I will continue my education at Northwest Missouri State University. I will pursue a Bachelor of Science degree in cellular and molecular biology, and I hope to follow that with master's degree and an eventual career in research.

My experience at the Missouri Academy has given me more than just a foot in the door in many places. I have furthered Northwest's goals as the national communications chair for the Residence Hall Association, where I was the voice of on-campus residents at the regional and national level. I also have had the opportunity to serve as a lab assistant in Washington University's Cancer Biology Lab and as an intern for Anodyne Surgical. This is all just the beginning of my story, and thanks to my experiences at the Missouri Academy, who knows where the road ahead may take me.

KYUSUK OH – CLASS OF 2018 –

I received college acceptance letters from the University of California-Berkeley, Emory University, University of Michigan-Ann Arbor, Georgia Institute of Technology and more. Obviously, the Missouri Academy was the major reason for these acceptances. Nevertheless, this was only the tip of an iceberg of what the Missouri Academy gave me.

The Missouri Academy's special community of scholars is what made the school so special. STEM-focused curriculum, various club activities and numerous competition opportunities enabled us to widen our fields of interest and deepen our depth of knowledge. I applied to the Missouri Academy because I was more than eager to meet scholars from all around the world. Surely, I benefited from the warm atmosphere where we discussed math problems on the white boards and did our final review for biology exams.

Our class experienced a tragic accident and unfortunate situations through our journey. These events came at us like tsunamis and were hard to recover from. Some hurt us and left a scar in our hearts that some of us will keep forever. However, the important aspect was that we all went through them together and overcame them together. We became brighter from the darkness, stronger from the weakness. Obstacles only made us more resilient and closely bonded.

I like the class name "Dreamers" because it reflects what I was like in the Missouri Academy. By attending the Missouri Academy, I realized my dream and learned what I needed to do to achieve it. Now having fulfilled my long dream, I am off to new dreamland travel.

Graduating from Missouri Academy is certainly not the end for any of us. It serves as a new start, a new opportunity. I'm sure my classmates are off dreaming of their new goals, just like I am.

YUNA KIM – CLASS OF 2018 –

Upon graduation from the Missouri Academy, I plan to attend Georgia Institute of Technology and major in biomedical engineering in fall 2018.

From the first day I came to Missouri Academy, I have encountered numerous challenges and events that I never would have had anywhere else. To be honest, not all of them were good and enjoyable. From taking college courses in English to saying farewell to a friend, my two years at the Missouri Academy were full of hardships and frustrations. However, I surely do not regret my choice to come to the Missouri Academy. Whether it was friends, residential counselors, professors or someone else, there was always someone to talk to and willing to help. I overcame those initial challenges with their help and will finish two years together with a smiling face.

Just like our class name, "Dreamers," I had a long list of things I wanted to do in the future. The Missouri Academy gave me opportunities to fulfill those dreams. For example, in the summer after my first year, I did research about determining the role of Puf proteins in regulating mRNA translation in yeast. During summer 2017, I participated in a research experience that has played a crucial role in determining my major and future careers. Although the research was done at the University of Missouri St. Louis (in the STARS Program), classes I took at the Missouri Academy such as genetics and general chemistry were extremely helpful in understanding and proceeding the experiment. The Missouri Academy was like a ladder that helped me get the books on the top shelf.

Two years at Missouri Academy was a great and unforgettable experience. It gave me an opportunity to grow both intellectually and as a person.

SIYUAN PAN – CLASS OF 2018 –

I remember I was quite excited when I was accepted to the Missouri Academy. I was looking forward to the new environment, friends I would meet, and things I would experience. Honestly, the Missouri Academy has been quite a challenge for me. I was unfamiliar with the American education system, which is very different from the one in China. I had to start a new journey at the Missouri Academy. Until now, the journey has gone well, with some of my great success. My college application process was successful – with several offers from universities. This shows that the Missouri Academy was a perfect match for me.

At the Missouri Academy, I was surrounded by a group of intelligent friends, helpful professors and different resources that helped me with my academic work. Taking the advance college courses stimulated my potential to be a better person. I also learned to be independent, which shows a sign of my growth. During my life at the Missouri Academy, I benefited a lot from my peers and staff members, but I also faced some hard situations that I needed to overcome. As I dealt with the different situations at the Missouri Academy, I noticed and learned the importance of interpersonal skills. As I gained both knowledge and friendship, I also noticed a change in me as a person and had more confidence in myself. The experience I got at the Missouri Academy will absolutely pave my way to the future.

While waiting for college decisions and graduation, I give thanks for the advantages the Missouri Academy brought me. The Missouri Academy served as a platform to help me reach a higher, greater place. Being a Missouri Academy student made me stand out among many excellent high school students. In my college life, I will keep the things learned from the Missouri Academy and try my best to reach greatness. I am proud of being a Missouri Academy student.

SABRINA DUFFY – CLASS OF 2018 –

I can safely say the Missouri Academy has been one of the most transformative experiences I have been through to date. I will walk away from Northwest Missouri State University as a different person than I was when I walked in. I have met some of the most talented and capable individuals, and I am confident the friendships I've made over the past two years will continue for the rest of my life.

If someone asked me to define the Missouri Academy, I would tell them that it is the only place in America you can reasonably expect to find a group of 16-year-olds vehemently discussing quantum theory one second and eating cold pizza with equal fervor the next. It is the first taste of independence paired with the rude awakening that laundry does not, in fact, do itself. The Missouri Academy is where I learned that innate intellect gets you nowhere if it is not accompanied by resilience and a fiery work ethic, two things I admittedly lacked going into this program. Frantically studying the fundamental theorem of calculus at 4 in the morning is something you can only do once before the whole "time management" thing becomes incredibly appealing. In general, this is where I figured out how to manage my own life and function as a college student. I am no longer the overwhelmed 14-year-old struggling to juggle all of my classes but a determined and well-prepared student excited for the next chapter of my life.

In fall 2018, I will attend Purdue University to pursue a Bachelor of Science degree in aerospace engineering. I hope to complete at least one internship before I graduate, and I intend to get a bit of professional experience before I enter graduate school. Beyond that, I will certainly live up to the title of a "Dreamer." Although I couldn't possibly give a definitive prediction as to where I will end up further down the line, I hope to earn my doctoral degree and work in a research and development position for an astronautics-focused company such as Blue Origins, SpaceX or NASA.

JIE QIU – CLASS OF 2018 –

When I first heard about the Missouri Academy, I was thrilled. Excited by the idea of living in a close-knit community and taking college courses, I decided to apply as a freshman.

At the Missouri Academy, so many wonderful academic opportunities were within easy reach. I enrolled in numerous advanced math courses; calculus III, linear algebra, transition to proofs, analysis. I sat side-by-side with traditional college mathematics majors, no longer seeing myself as merely a high school student but as one of them. I also reached out to professors on campus, indicating my wish to participate in research. Through my mathematical and mathematical physics research, I learned to challenge original definitions, evaluate different scenarios, and construct proofs. I am constantly pushing my limits through my transformation from a mere knowledge-recipient to a passionate critical thinker, and I absolutely fell in love with my new self.

However, what truly made the Missouri Academy special is not only the academics, but also the community. It is at the Missouri Academy that I had the chance to become friends with Chinese, Koreans and Americans, and it is at the Missouri Academy that I had the privilege to become a community leader, to push past my limits and help build my community. Together with my peers and Missouri Academy staff members, we had great fun participating in wing games and various community leader and residential counselor programs.

The two years at the Missouri Academy have not been easy but rather filled with challenges both academically and socially. I drowned myself in the sorrow of losing a fellow classmate, Jaewon Lee, and have found it extremely difficult to accept the Missouri Academy is closing. I have struggled through the college application season and faced ever so many college rejections. Indeed, these were times of frustration, but I'm beyond grateful for the support from my roommates, friends and staff members. Their love gave me the strength to never give up in the face of stormy weather but rather to grow from it and become a stronger person.

In fall 2018, I will head off to college to major in applied mathematics or data science, and I will transfer the credits I earned at the Missouri Academy. I also will take these beautiful memories with me as I go further in life.

SUMMARY OF ACHIEVEMENTS

Lessons Learned

A few important lessons were learned from Missouri Academy's 18 years of operation:

- Based on two faculty surveys carried out at Northwest Missouri State University in 2006 and then again in 2011, about a third of the faculty surveyed admitted (without being specifically asked) that the presence of Missouri Academy students in the classes they taught caused them to raise standards in order to challenge the students. This was a clear case of the quality of students driving the quality of instruction in a positive direction. The greatest positive impact of the Missouri Academy at Northwest Missouri State University was in the area of faculty satisfaction with Missouri Academy students, their classroom behavior and performance and in student participation in undergraduate STEM research.
- The Missouri Academy showed that societal fears about educational "acceleration" are groundless. Having adolescents (15-18 years old) living and learning in a university setting did not result in "catastrophe." Instead, it was a positive experience for the adolescents involved and a benefit to society as a whole.
- The Missouri Academy was successful from its inception in August 2000. This success was largely attributable to:
  - a high-quality, academically challenging environment with high expectations, and
  - an enriched, supportive, residential life program run by capable professionals.
- Missouri Academy served to reverse the larger societal problem/trend of the declining number of U.S. youth choosing to specialize in STEM fields.
- There is a significant population of high school sophomores for whom going through 11th and 12th grades of traditional high school is not a very wise expenditure of their time. They are well-served by going directly into a university environment.

Marks of Distinction

Pride in Our Students

- During the 18 years of its operation, the Missouri Academy graduated 892 students in 17 classes — representing an approximate 74 percent average graduation rate over the 18-year period.
- The average composite ACT score at the time of admission to the Missouri Academy was 26.9. The average composite ACT score at the time of graduation from Missouri Academy was 30.1. These scores exceeded those of students at traditional high schools or similar academies.
- Approximately 80 percent of Missouri Academy students maintained a cumulative GPA of 3.0 or higher during their tenure at the Missouri Academy; 60 percent of them were on the Northwest Missouri State University Honor Roll (GPA>3.5) every trimester; and about 30% on the Presidential Honor Roll (GPA=4.0).
- 92 percent of Missouri Academy students have scored at or higher than the 67th percentile on the General Education Assessment (ETS, ACP) test given by the university in their second year. About 61 percent of these students scored at or higher than the 90th percentile.
- More than 79 percent of students participated in on-campus clubs and organizations during the school year; about 34% of Missouri Academy students, per cohort, participated in summer activities such as basic research, internships, American Legion Boys State and Girls State and other public service activities.
- Missouri Academy students consistently placed at the top in statewide and regional competitions in Mathematics, Future Business Leaders of America (FBLA), Model United Nations, Envirothon, Beta Club competitions and Science Olympiad.

Pride in Our School

- The Missouri Academy was one of only eight publicly funded, residential, early-entrance-to-college programs in the nation, and only one of two programs that offered both an Associate of Science degree and a high school diploma, simultaneously, to its students at graduation.
- The Missouri Academy student residence hall was set up so that one adult live-in Residential Counselor (with at least a bachelor's degree) oversaw 20-25 Missouri Academy students. This living arrangement lent itself to a living and learning environment where students felt supported.
- 86% of Missouri Academy graduates are able to transfer 60 or more credits to their new colleges and universities.
- In an annual survey of Missouri Academy graduates, greater than 90 percent ranked Northwest Missouri State University professors to be as good as, or better than, professors at other colleges and universities – with regard to undergraduate teaching;
- The Missouri Academy living and learning community was significantly diverse:
  - 35 percent of the students came from rural and suburban Missouri
  - 65 percent of the students came from Missouri's urban and metro areas
  - U.S. minority students fluctuated between 9 and 13 percent
  - 40-45 percent of the students (especially from the Class of 2010 to the Class of 2018) were international students – originating from countries such as China, South Korea, Panama, Spain and Italy
- The principles of integrity and quality (IQ) had a significant impact on Missouri Academy students and their living/learning environment as was evidenced by student involvement in community service, very few disciplinary issues, academic excellence and their positive and productive interactions with the traditional Northwest Missouri State University students on campus.

Pride in Our Graduates

- Nearly 100 percent of Missouri Academy graduates went on to complete 4-year baccalaureate degree programs. All graduates were successful; domestic students received scholarships to cover at least 60 percent of costs and they maintained a mean GPA of 3.5 during their first year after graduating from the Missouri Academy. Eighty-five percent completed their baccalaureate degrees in 2-3 years.
- 86 percent of Missouri Academy graduates are able to transfer 60 or more credits to their new colleges and universities — these students achieved the college junior and senior academic standing at their colleges/universities one year after graduation from the Missouri Academy.
- 87 percent of Missouri Academy graduates pursued baccalaureate degrees in STEM fields.
- 56 percent of Missouri Academy graduates who completed baccalaureate degrees also went on to post-baccalaureate degree programs such as master's degrees, doctoral degrees, medical degrees, Pharm. D. and law degrees.
- Based on a survey done in 2012, almost all graduates from the Classes of 2002 through 2011 indicated that they were gainfully employed or were in graduate programs.

Missouri Academy

Science | Mathematics | Computing

Northwest Missouri State University