



Annual Report

2020-2021

Several grants provide funding for advanced welding and fabrication program

Classes start in the 2021 fall semester

Missouri State University-West Plains received several grants during the 2020-2021 academic year that aided in the development of a new advanced welding and fabrication degree program to begin enrolling students for the 2021 fall semester.

In September, U.S. Senator Roy Blunt announced \$960,000 in funding from the U.S. Department of Labor through its Workforce Opportunities for Rural Communities (WORC) program, and in partnership with the Delta Regional Authority (DRA), to establish an advanced welding and fabrication program at the West Plains campus.

“Receiving this grant was a critical piece of MSU-WP’s next step in providing training in the advanced skill sets needed by workers employed by our industry partners,” Interim Chancellor Dennis Lancaster said. “In particular, the grant will fund an advanced fabrication and welding program and assist in funding the development of a Level 3 weld lab on our campus.”

In November, university officials were notified of another \$130,000 grant from DRA through its Delta Workforce Grant Program (DWP)

to purchase equipment that will help students train for advanced workforce positions in robotics. The funds were used to purchase two pieces of equipment that will provide students with hands-on training in robotic skills used in manufacturing and fabrication facilities.

“We’re overwhelmed by the interest and support of U.S. Senators Roy Blunt and Josh Hawley and of 8th District Congressman Jason Smith in what we’re doing here,” Lancaster said. “They and their staff members are always asking about how things are going and what they can do to help us. We couldn’t ask for greater partners.”

With news of the initial grant funding in September, faculty and staff moved quickly to develop the advanced welding and fabrication technology program for the 2021 fall semester. This included hiring new personnel, upgrading manufacturing and maintenance programs, and finding a location for the lab.

To ensure the program’s start in fall 2021, the advanced welding and fabrication lab is being temporarily housed at the Greater Ozarks Center for Advanced Technology (GOCAT)



facility. Plans are underway to renovate the campus’ Broadway Building with funding from the state and permanently locate a state-of-the-art welding and fabrication lab there for use by students for years to come. In June, the governor approved the FY22 budget that included a capital bill with an additional \$1 million for the renovation project.

“Thanks to Governor Mike Parson, Senator Karla Eslinger, Representative David Evans, and the Missouri General Assembly for providing funding to renovate the Broadway

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This initial concept design from the Missouri State University Office of Planning, Design and Construction shows the 2,000-square-foot addition on the southeast corner of Looney Hall. (MSU Image)

MSU-WP awarded nearly \$1 million to expand nursing program

Missouri State University-West Plains was awarded nearly \$1 million from the state in June to expand its nursing program. Members of the Missouri Coordinating Board for Higher Education (CBHE) approved granting \$953,118 from the Governor's Emergency Education Relief (GEER) Excels Fund program to the university to help design and construct an addition to Looney Hall that will house a new and larger lecture classroom. The addition will allow the nursing program to increase the admissions capacity

for its Associate of Science in Nursing (ASN) degree regular track program from 25 students each semester to 35 students each semester.

"As we all realize to an even greater extent these days, having highly trained, highly skilled nurses is a critical part of what we need and expect in a thriving, healthy community," Interim Chancellor Dennis Lancaster said. "To meet this need and the ongoing demand for our RN program, this addition of

classroom space will allow us to seek yet another expansion of our nursing program and the number of students we can serve.

"We greatly appreciate Governor (Mike) Parson and the Missouri Department of Higher Education and Workforce Development (MDHEWD) for their support and financial assistance to make this happen for our campus and students," he added.

Current plans are to have the new addition open by the 2022 fall semester.

New AAS degree designed to fill local need

In June, the Missouri Department of Higher Education and Workforce Development (MDHEWD) approved a new degree for Missouri State-West Plains. The Associate of Applied Science (AAS) in Community Behavioral Health Support degree will prepare students to enter the workforce as community support specialists for those with behavioral and mental health diagnoses.

A \$50,000 grant from the Missouri Coalition for Community Behavioral Healthcare will cover program costs, including hiring a

program coordinator who will work with local providers for clinical placements and oversee the launch and growth of the program.

Based on current employment trends in Missouri, officials estimate 500 new job openings each year for community support specialists, with an estimated 22 percent increase in job outlook, according to the Occupational Outlook Handbook. MSU-WP will partner with Ozarks Healthcare of West Plains and the Missouri Behavioral Health Coalition in the delivery of the program.

AWARDS AND ACHIEVEMENTS

- Lyndsey Parker, Missouri State University, Citizen Scholar Award
- Melinda Denton, Missouri Council on Public Higher Education, Governor's Award for Excellence in Education
- Misty Davis, MSU-WP Part-Time Employee of the Year (2020)
- Paula Wiedemann, NJCAA Volleyball Coaches Hall of Fame inductee

Dedication ceremony held for Arch W. Shaw Foundation Writing Center

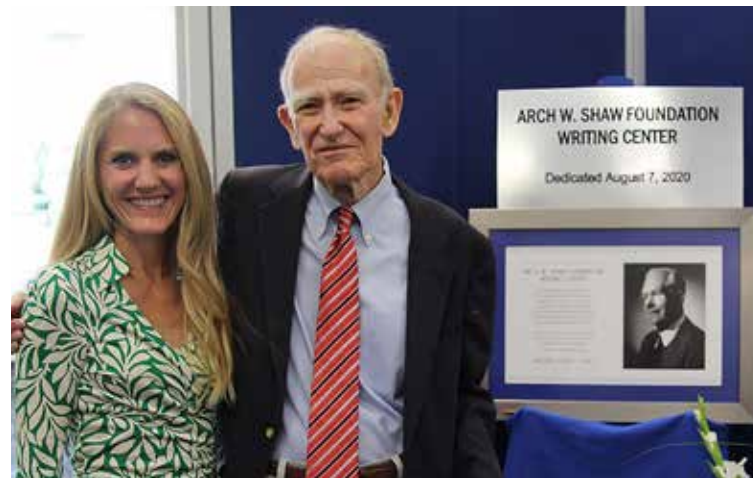
Thanks to a significant gift from the Arch W. Shaw Foundation, the writing center at Missouri State-West Plains will help students successfully hone those skills for years to come.

University officials recognized the gift during a ribbon cutting and dedication ceremony Aug. 7 at the center in Hass-Darr Hall. During the ceremony, the center was renamed the Arch W. Shaw Foundation Writing Center.

Arch W. Shaw was a business leader, publisher and adviser to presidents. Shaw's descendants settled in south-central Missouri and have been instrumental in

the area's progress. Since the 1980s, family members and the foundation have supported MSU-WP and its students with gifts toward scholarships, building projects and other campus fundraisers. The gift to the writing center will aid its staff in their mission to help students improve their writing skills.

A desire to help students in south-central Missouri is an integral part of the family's and foundation's purpose in giving,



William Shaw and his daughter, Emily Streit, stand next to the dedication plaque.

according to trustee William Shaw.

"The Shaw family has a heart for the students of this region, and we want to inspire them to rise up and reach for the stars," he said.

Advanced welding and fabrication program

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building and provide a permanent home for the welding and fabrication lab," Lancaster said. "In the Missouri State-West Plains service area alone, 12 manufacturers report they currently have 200 openings for welders, fabricators, CNC and maintenance technicians, and many said they expect to hire an additional 500 over the next four to six years."

The advanced welding and fabrication technology program can be completed as a stand-alone, 24-credit-hour certificate program in two semesters or as an option of the Associate of Applied Science in Technology degree in two years.

"The program will prepare students for careers in advanced fabrication and welding by focusing on such skills as structural design and fabrication, automated systems, and robotic arc

welding, all of which are in high demand," said Sheila Barton, director of workforce development programs at MSU-WP.

"Machine manufacturing, industrial maintenance, welding and fabrication rank among the top five careers for Missouri, and the need for technicians in manufacturing, maintenance and advanced welding is

expected to increase 43% by 2026," she said.

"These programs will create a pipeline of qualified candidates for local and regional employers, provide training for underrepresented groups, rebuild our communities with a trained workforce, provide sustainable living wages for families and encourage local industry expansion," Barton explained.

\$300,000 grant will benefit first-generation students

First-generation students enrolling at Missouri State-West Plains will receive additional support in their educational efforts thanks to a Title III cooperative grant project with MSU in Springfield. MSU-WP will receive approximately \$300,000 from the grant over the next five years to

provide academic coaching and advising services to first-generation students, particularly those interested in studying agriculture, nursing and technology. The funds from the U.S. Department of Education will help the West Plains campus to continue to build support systems for retaining first-generation students.

Student News

Grizzlies take 9th place in national volleyball tourney

The Grizzly Volleyball team swept Northeastern Junior College 3-0 in the final day of the NJCAA Division I National Volleyball Championship Tournament to win ninth place. The 13th-seeded Grizzlies (20-6) downed the 10th-seeded Plainswomen (22-10) from Sterling, Colorado, 25-18, 25-13, 25-15 on their home court at the West Plains Civic Center, site of this year's three-day tournament. The Grizzlies also received the tournament's Sportsmanship Award.



10th issue of Elder Mountain: A Journal of Ozarks Studies released

For the past 10 years, editors of Missouri State-West Plains' "Elder Mountain: A Journal of Ozarks Studies" have shared an array of masterfully written pieces and beautifully framed images touting the unique characteristics of this region.

Issue 10 of "Elder Mountain" was released during the 2020 fall semester and offers more than 200 pages of new material and a sampling of the best articles from past issues. In addition to the hard copy journal, there also is an online version of "Elder Mountain" at WP.MissouriState.edu/Elder-Mountain.

The journal welcomes work from most every academic field, and many of its contributors are among the most respected scholars and writers in the field of Ozarks studies.



Phi Beta Lambda (PBL) students earn medals

Four students from the West Plains campus received a total of eight medals at the virtual PBL State Leadership Conference. Three of those students placed in competitions offered virtually by the PBL National Leadership Experience.

Nursing students helped with COVID-19 vaccine clinics

During the 2021 spring semester, Missouri State-West Plains nursing students assisted at multiple vaccination clinics in the area to help healthcare providers administer COVID-19 vaccines to their neighbors and friends. MSU-WP Director of Nursing Amy Ackerson estimates the students helped administer well-over 5,000 injections.



QUICK FACTS

2020 FALL ENROLLMENT

Headcount: 1,922

***MSU Outreach: 118**

Total Students Served: 2,040

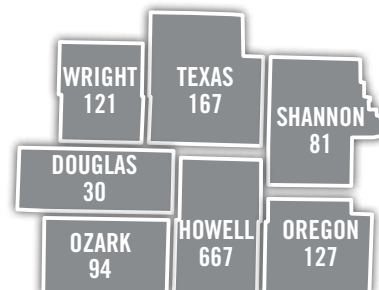
Full-time: 717

Part-time: 1,203

Non-credit: 2

** Missouri State University's Outreach program offers bachelor's & master's degrees on the West Plains campus.*

COUNTY ENROLLMENT



Other Missouri Counties: 529

Out-of State: 95

International: 11

WP.MissouriState.edu

To become a student, call 417-255-7955 or go to wp.missouristate.edu/admissions
To support the campus, call 417-255-7240 or go to wp.missouristate.edu/development

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