

# 20<sup>17</sup> 18

## ANNUAL REPORT



Missouri State–West Plains says goodbye to Chancellor Bennett and welcomes Dr. Lawler.

## Chancellor Drew Bennett Retires; Dr. Shirley Lawler becomes new chancellor

Missouri State University–West Plains underwent a change in leadership during the 2017–18 academic year. Dr. Drew Bennett announced his retirement in August, and Dr. Shirley Lawler took the reins as the campus' new chancellor on June 1, 2018.

Bennett was the campus' seventh chancellor and its second longest serving at the time of his departure May 31. During his 11-year tenure, the campus increased enrollment by 10 percent and increased full-time faculty by 26 percent, including three endowed professorships. The campus also added 10 new associate degrees while generating more than \$8.8 million in donations and more than \$11 million in grant funding.

Bennett's impact on the physical campus during the last 11 years included 12 building renovation projects and three new facilities – the FEMA/Student Recreation Center, Gohn Hall and Hass-Darr Hall (currently under construction with a targeted fall 2018 completion). More than 2,700 students graduated from the campus while Bennett was chancellor.

Lawler became the first woman to lead the West Plains campus when her

appointment to the chancellor's post was announced May 1 following an extensive nationwide search. The former Hartville resident served as provost/vice chancellor for academic and student affairs at Ozarks Technical Community College until her retirement in 2012.

She began at OTC in 1997 and served in a number of positions, including associate vice president for academic affairs, dean of technical education and dean of academic services. Prior to working at OTC, Lawler worked at Logan-Rogersville High School for 12 years. She also was an adjunct instructor at Missouri State University in Springfield from 1984-2002.

Lawler has a doctorate in education from the University of Missouri. She also has a bachelor's in business education and Master of Education in secondary education, both from Missouri State.



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## Grant awarded to fund amphitheater

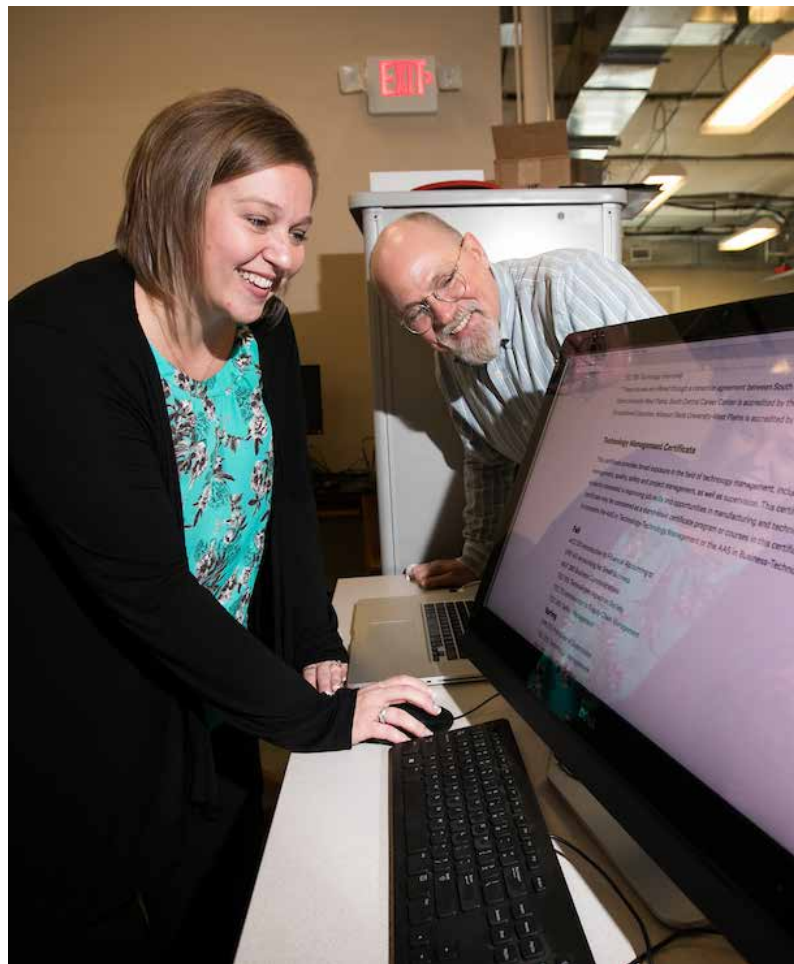
In October, Missouri State–West Plains was awarded a \$202,137 grant from the U.S. Department of Interior’s Land & Water Conservation Fund for construction of an outdoor amphitheater.

This project has been a goal for the West Plains campus for many years. The grant, along with private donations already received or pledged, will allow the amphitheater to become a reality. Plans call for an 850-seat venue, which will be constructed just west of the Smith-London Centennial Bell Tower. It will provide the university and the greater West Plains community an outdoor venue for spectator events, concerts, rallies, films and theatrical performances. A significant aspect of this project is that it will be built without the use of operational funds or reserves. The project should be completed in late summer or early fall 2019.

## GOCAT opens on schedule

Despite damages caused by extensive flooding on April 29, 2017, training programs started on schedule at the Greater Ozarks Center for Advanced Technology (GOCAT) for the 2017 fall semester.

After months of renovations to the former city scales building on Howell Avenue, a large contingent of community leaders and government representatives officially opened the center April 21, 2017, with a ribbon cutting ceremony. The 16,000-square-foot facility, which is designed to provide training for key technological skills in demand by manufacturers, was damaged by the flood eight days later. Although the floodwaters slowed momentum, GOCAT’s three partners, Missouri State–West Plains, South Central Career Center (SCCC) and the City of West Plains, were committed to having the workforce development programs at the GOCAT up and running by the fall semester. GOCAT is a \$2.5 million investment for the community. Associate degrees and certificates focusing on immediate entry into the workforce are offered at the center by the university.



# STUDENT NEWS



Students from the West Plains campus received five medals at the Future Business Leaders of America/Phi Beta Lambda State Leadership Conference in April. At the national conference in June, one of the students placed sixth in Accounting Principles.



Organizers of the Ozarks Gaming Convention (OzCon) hosted by Missouri State University–West Plains' Computer Graphics and Programming (CGP) Department and the student chapter of Association for Computer Machinery (ACM) raised \$2,500 for Christos House, a local shelter for domestic violence victims in south-central Missouri. This is the fifth year for the event, which was held April 27-29 at the West Plains Civic Center. Each year, proceeds from the gaming, cosplay and anime convention benefit a local non-profit organization or agency.



Seventeen students participating in Missouri State University–West Plains' federally-funded TRIO Student Support Services program were awarded \$11,641.14 in scholarships from program funds. To be eligible for a scholarship, students must be enrolled full time at the university for the past two semesters, be an active participant in the program, complete a TRIO workshop or event and financial literacy training through TRIO, attend regularly scheduled appointments with TRIO advisers, and maintain a grade point average of 2.75 on a 4.0 scale.



Nine students from the Agriculture Department at Missouri State–West Plains attended the 2018 National Postsecondary Agriculture Students (PAS) Organization Conference and Convention March 13-16 in Louisville, Kentucky. Two students were speakers at the national convention, and five students placed in the competitions.

# ATHLETICS



On March 3, the Missouri State University-West Plains Grizzly Basketball team picked up its fourth NJCAA Region 16 championship trophy in program history – and its first in seven years – after defeating the Mineral Area College Cardinals of Park Hills 74-71 at Lincoln University in Jefferson City.



The 2017 Grizzly Volleyball team earned the Team Academic Award from the American Volleyball Coaches Association (AVCA). The award honors collegiate and high school volleyball teams that displayed excellence in the classroom during the school year by maintaining at least a 3.30 cumulative team grade point average on a 4.0 scale. The Grizzlies had a GPA of 3.58 this past year. This is the third consecutive year the Grizzlies qualified for the AVCA award. The team also received the 2017-2018 Academic Team Award from the National Junior College Athletic Association (NJCAA)

## AWARDS AND ACHIEVEMENTS

Dr. Craig Albin, Missouri Library Association's Missouri Author Award

Dr. Drew Bennett, Rural Community College Alliance's George Autry Lifetime Achievement Award

Ana Estrella-Riollano, Missouri State University, Faculty Excellence in Public Affairs Award

Frank Priest, Missouri Council on Public Higher Education's Governor's Award for Excellence in Education

Scott Schneider, Missouri State University, Staff Excellence in Community Service

Briana Walsh, Missouri Sports Hall of Fame's Wynn Award

Micaela Wiehe, Missouri State University Citizen Scholar

## QUICK FACTS

### FALL 2017 ENROLLMENT

Headcount: 1,930

\*MSU Outreach: 127

Total Students Served: 2,057

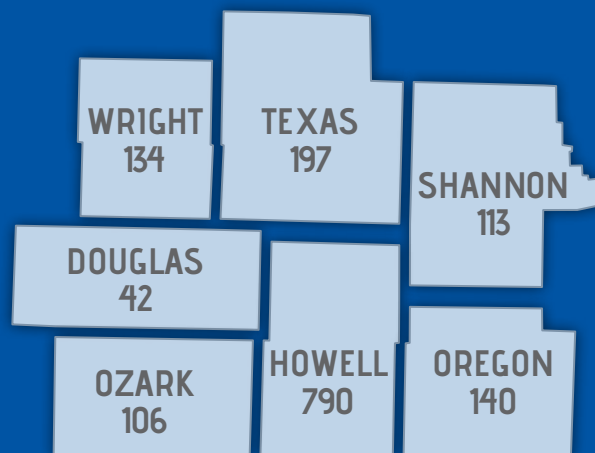
Full-time: 949

Part-time: 969

Non-credit: 12

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

### County Enrollment



Other Missouri Counties: 330

Out-of State: 62

International: 16