

OUTCOMES

Spring
2019

Vol. 5, No. 1

Impactful and Inspiring

How five faculty experts are serving students in
the College of Behavioral and Health Sciences

**MIDDLE
TENNESSEE**
STATE UNIVERSITY.



Blue Horseshoe

A symbol of tradition
and good fortune for
Middle Tennessee State University.

THOSE WHO TOUCH THE BLUE HORSESHOE
WILL BE GRANTED GOOD LUCK.

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MIDDLE TENNESSEE

STATE UNIVERSITY

COLLEGE OF BEHAVIORAL AND HEALTH SCIENCES

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Letter from the Dean

Another Successful Year

Yet again, we have closed out another successful year in the College of Behavioral and Health Sciences at MTSU. We look forward with anticipation as hundreds of our students (now alumni), who graduated with their degrees during May commencement, start their careers for which we helped them train. On campus, we are now preparing for the thousands of new faces who are excitedly taking the first step toward their future through our Criminal Justice Administration, Human Sciences, Health and Human Performance, Nursing, Psychology, and Social Work programs. They have chosen MTSU to be the catalyst, and we are grateful and up to the challenge.



Dean Terry Whiteside

In this issue of the CBHS magazine, *Outcomes*:

- You will learn about an exciting new major in our college that is the first of its kind in the great state of Tennessee. Tourism and Hospitality Management is housed in Health and Human Performance and is quickly taking the campus by storm.
- We congratulate a veteran alumnus who tells his harrowing story.
- We share in-depth interviews with a small sample of our top-notch educators.
- Criminal Justice Administration and Social Work have stimulating out-of-the-classroom educational experiences. These departments are readying to join Psychology in our new, state-of-the-art building, which is well in the process of construction.
- We take a snapshot of this nation's health care through the eyes of our School of Nursing and internationally with the help of the Adams Chair of Excellence in Healthcare Services.

The common principle of our departments is that we all work toward happier, healthier people and healthier communities. Although each unique in their own way, our focus areas strive for excellence in teaching, service, and research while making the world a better place. Now more than ever, our college needs your help to continue these efforts. Join us in supporting our students, faculty, and departments as we work toward even better outcomes for the students of the future.

Please feel free to contact the college with questions or observations at 615-898-2000. For information about supporting the college and our programs, our Development Director Kristin Wells can be reached at 615-898-2417 or kristin.wells@mtsu.edu.

Southern Hospitality

MTSU launches the first Tourism and Hospitality Management degree in middle Tennessee

by Gina K. Logue

MTSU IS POISED TO BECOME ONE OF THE PREMIER institutions for furnishing personnel to a burgeoning industry that is critical to the mid-state economy and in need of skilled professionals.

In March, the University announced the creation of a Tourism and Hospitality Management degree. And it did so, appropriately enough, from the Grandview Terrace of one of its partners, the Omni Nashville Hotel. The major is available starting with the Fall 2019 semester and is the only such degree program in middle Tennessee.

The multitrillion-dollar hospitality industry supports one in 10 jobs worldwide and is growing by about 5% each year, according to the World Travel and Tourism Council. That organization projects that the tourism and hospitality field will rise to more than 413 million jobs globally by 2028.

The new MTSU program has three emphasis areas—travel and tourism management, hospitality and hotel management, and event planning. Students can choose one or combine all three.

“It’s an industry that you work in because you love it,” said Joey Gray, associate professor in the existing Leisure, Sport, and Tourism Studies (LSTS) program. “It’s a job that you look forward to going to every day. . . .

The industry knows how to keep employees. They know how to make employees happy.”

MTSU President Sidney A. McPhee emphasized that the tourism and hospitality field is less about gleaming high-rise buildings and more about taking care of people.

“This program will work in making sure that our students have those people skills, those ‘soft skills’—interpersonal relationships, communication, empathy—so they can be the best that they can be in this industry,” McPhee said.

The new program plans to include an advanced bachelor’s-to-master’s track, allowing students to earn both degrees in five years and enabling graduates to enter the workforce more quickly.

MTSU is uniquely well-positioned to offer the degree because of the sport and tourism management classes already offered by the Department of Health and Human Performance.

Murfreesboro native Brooke Culver, who earned her LSTS bachelor’s in 2018 and her Leisure and Sport Management master’s in May 2019, already has a wide variety of internships and other working experiences to show future employers.

Culver has worked at Arrington Vineyards in the wine tourism industry, done character performance for Walt Disney World, and participated in field studies with Hilton Hotels and Resorts.

“I am fully prepared to enter the workforce as a hospitality and tourism professional, and I will always be grateful for the doors that this degree has opened for me,” Culver said.

Eric Opron, Omni Hotel general manager, applauded MTSU’s development of a

program that he feels will serve as a pipeline of talented graduates attractive to his company and others.

“How would it be to know that when you go to school, as soon as I graduate, I have a great job waiting for me?” he said. “Because you do, trust me you do.”

Partners in supporting the new program include the Nashville Area Chamber of Commerce, Tennessee Recreation and Parks Association, Rutherford County Hospitality Association, Embassy Suites, Nashville Convention and Visitors Corp., Tennessee Hospitality and Tourism Association, and Rutherford County Convention and Visitors Bureau.

“We are committed to putting out the most educated, the most well-prepared graduates that will not only represent our University very well, but will also take this industry to the next level,” McPhee said. [MTSU](#)

The tourism and hospitality field will rise to more than 413 million jobs globally by 2028.





COMPLETING THE JOURNEY

Exercise Science graduate Jay Strobino, shot 13 times in Iraq, had a difficult, different, "crazy" journey transitioning from military service through graduation

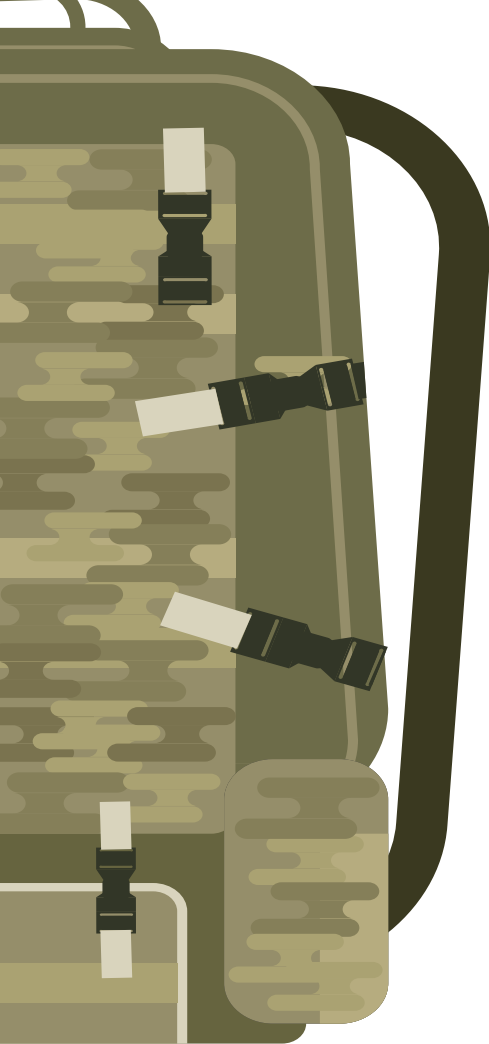
by Allison Gorman



WHEN JAY STROBINO ('18), A MEMBER OF THE U.S. Army's 101st Infantry Division, peeked around the corner of a building in Iraq and saw an enemy soldier reloading his weapon, he did what he'd been trained to do. He didn't think—he moved.

"In combat arms, you do all your training so you don't have to think. You only react," Strobino said. "Because thinking about something takes too much time, and that's when people die."

Actually, the fact that Strobino didn't die that day in Iraq is nothing short of a miracle. As Strobino rushed toward the soldier, he realized that he was too far away to disarm him but too close to retreat. He also was outgunned.



“I had a very small-caliber weapon that was not fully automatic; he had a larger-caliber weapon that was fully automatic. I was in a lose-lose situation. I brought a spoon to a knife fight,” he said.

Strobino is quick to point out that “only seven” shots went through his body, and that two of the six shots that hit his flak jacket hurt the worst. But seven shots were enough to make a softball-size hole through his lung, break his femur, and damage the ulnar nerve in one arm, rendering it useless.

Those injuries, received in 2006 during Strobino’s second tour in Iraq, marked the end of his military career and the beginning of a torturous journey back to health, and then to a new life as a college student—first at Columbia State Community College and then at MTSU.

He was moved from Baghdad to Germany to Walter Reed Hospital to rehab in Fort Gordon, Georgia, bedridden for a month before he could stand on one foot, leaning against his bed, for 60 seconds. He couldn’t walk for six months. Once he could, though, Strobino started setting goals for himself and measuring his progress.

“Sometimes it was a very small goal, but if you make that little effort every day, it’s something to shoot for,” he said. “It’s nice to have that.”

Going to college, on the other hand, “was a constant struggle,” Strobino said. “I’d spent six years training myself not to think. Then to come back and do the one thing I’d been training myself not to do was quite difficult.”

It’s a testament to Strobino that he passed all his classes anyway. It’s a testament to MTSU that he got his diploma and the recognition he deserved.

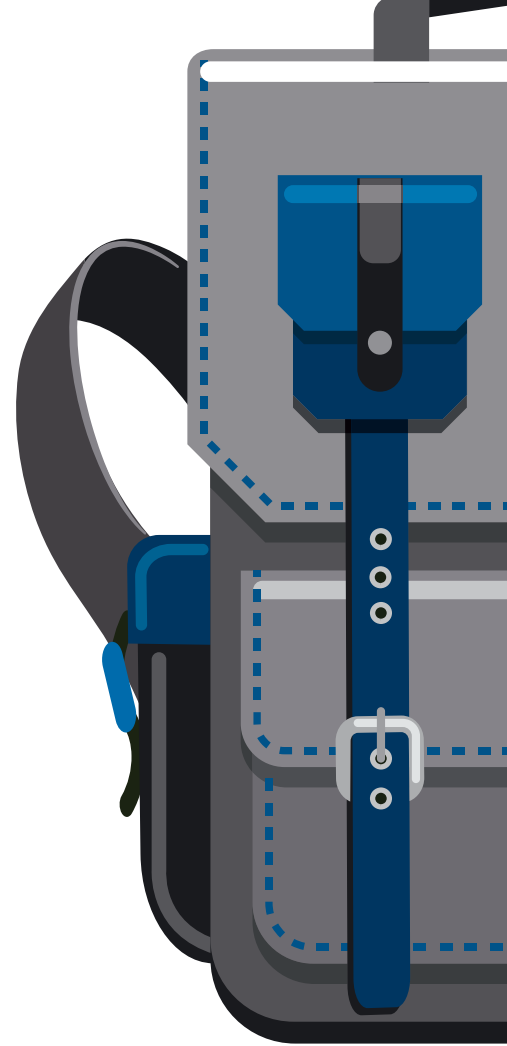


Just when the only thing that stood between Strobino and a degree in Exercise Science was paperwork, his college career ground to a halt. For myriad reasons roughly categorizable as life, logistics, and bureaucracy, he never officially graduated. At about the same time, MTSU began ramping up its service to veteran and other military-connected students.

Last September, five years after Strobino was eligible to graduate, mutual acquaintances put him in touch with retired U.S. Army Lt. Gen. Keith Huber, MTSU's senior advisor for veterans and leadership initiatives. Huber invited him to tour the Charlie and Hazel Daniels Veterans and Military Family Center, which hadn't existed when Strobino was attending MTSU. The staff there squared away his paperwork in a single day, and he graduated in December.

Strobino was "blown away" by his experience at the Daniels Center and deeply touched by something else new: a stole ceremony for graduating veterans, where he received the Journey Home Award.

"That's for a veteran who's had a difficult, or different, or crazy journey transitioning from service through graduation," Strobino explained. Then he laughed. "It was a pretty fitting award." [MTSU](#)



Jay Strobino, at MTSU's Graduating Veterans Stole Ceremony with retired Lt. Gen. Keith M. Huber (l), receives the Journey Award from David Corlew (r), co-founder of The Journey Home Project with entertainer Charlie Daniels.





Steven Estes



Impactful and Inspiring

by Gina K. Logue

How five faculty experts are serving students in the College of Behavioral and Health Sciences

PROFESSORS ARE AT THE CORE OF THE college experience. Their expertise provides the framework for delivery of a sound education.

The best don't just teach classes and write books; they inspire students and mentor protégés who graduate and make the world a better place.

MTSU's College of Behavioral and Health Sciences possesses an abundance of riches when it comes to faculty. We couldn't possibly profile all the wonderful professors housed in the college in these limited pages. Here, then, are just five selected from across the college who exemplify the quality of education available at MTSU. They are just some of the excellent educators your children and grandchildren can learn from if they choose to attend the University.

A Proven Leader

A national organization recently bestowed its highest award on Steven Estes, an MTSU professor in the Department of Health and Human Performance.

Estes received the President's Award from the National Association for Kinesiology in Higher Education (NAKHE) at the group's annual convention in Savannah, Georgia.

Since its founding in 1897, NAKHE has given a President's Award to one of its members only four times. It is presented to an individual who has exhibited exceptional leadership in the profession and in NAKHE.

Estes' research interests include the relationship of mind and body in sport and physical activity; the philosophy of science in physical activity studies; postmodern sport; and the processes of leader development. (Estes is in fact scheduled to serve as a professor in residence at West Point, teaching leadership classes at the U.S. Military Academy for the 2019–20 academic year.)



Thomas Brinthaup

He is the author or co-author of four textbooks and numerous articles.

Estes' interest in the field of kinesiology, which is the study of body mechanics, began when he was a college athlete. He trained and competed for U.S. National Rowing teams and for San Diego State University, where he earned his bachelor's and master's degrees in 1982 and 1985, respectively. He then received his doctorate from Ohio State University in 1990 with an emphasis in sport culture.

Estes has served two terms as president of NAKHE. Among his accomplishments are the organization's leadership institute, NAKHE Fellows Program, Engaged Scholar Program, Department Head Certification Program, and Leadership Mentor Program.

Proof of his expertise in how the human body works, Estes has in the not-too-distant past participated in a tandem jump with the U.S. Army's Golden Knights parachute team at Fort Knox, Kentucky; completed a 26-mile march with Army ROTC personnel; and scored in the top range for his age group on the Army Physical Fitness Test.

You Talking to You?

If you talk to yourself, you're not alone.

While that might sound like a classic aphorism from those insightful "philosophers" Yogi Berra and Casey Stengel, it's actually a psychological reality. Talking to oneself is not unusual, and it's not necessarily a sign of mental illness.

Professor Thomas Brinthaup, from MTSU's Department of Psychology, maintains that there are situations in which self-talk can be beneficial. These include attempting to remember something, trying to make a decision, expressing emotions, finding a solution to a problem, or facing a new challenge.

"The same areas of the brain light up when we talk internally as when we talk externally," Brinthaup said. "There's speech recognition and speech production functions in both of those. It's very similar to normal conversation, but it's internalized."

As a matter of fact, Brinthaup says children around 2 or 3 years of age talk to themselves or to stuffed animals or other imaginary playmates as part of normal development.

Brinthaup and his students conduct studies on dissociative experiences and self-talk. In psychology, dissociation is a condition that can range from merely ignoring one's surroundings, as is the case with daydreaming, to dissociative identity disorder, formerly called multiple personality disorder, in more extreme cases.

Brinthaup says two different hypotheses have emerged from the use of a standardized measure of how often individuals talk to themselves, called the Self-Talk Scale.

The "social isolation" theory posits that individuals who spend more time alone or who have more socially isolating experiences will talk to themselves more. The "cognitive disruption" theory asserts that individuals who experience disordered thinking will engage in more self-talk.

Brinthaup delivered the keynote address on the subject of self-talk at the April 2018 meeting of the Middle Tennessee Psychological Association on the MTSU campus. In a unique act of audience participation, attendees had the opportunity to talk to themselves during the presentation.

The Worlds Where We Live

Janis Brickey, an MTSU Department of Human Sciences faculty member, is designing a healthier way to create commercial and residential interiors.

After undergoing rigorous study, the Interior Design associate professor now can lay claim to being a WELL Accredited Professional. The designation from the International WELL Building Institute, also known as WBI, means Brickey is now a certified expert in ensuring human health and wellness in manmade environments.

The examination Brickey passed tested her knowledge of cross-disciplinary standards for air, water, nourishment, light, fitness, mind, and comfort in offices and homes.

For example, both the employer and the homeowner can position stairways in certain areas to prompt people to walk more, helping to improve fitness.

"It's not changing behavior, but it's enhancing positive behaviors," Brickey said.

Other ways people can change their living and working environments involve creating spaces that have more natural light or more open spaces that encourage people to get a breath of fresh air when they take breaks.



Janis Brickey



V. Nikki Jones



Fresh Perspectives

Two young women of color who dare to be different between the pages of a book are giving tweens inspiration to be themselves in the face of peer pressure.

V. Nikki Jones, an assistant professor in the Department of Social Work, is the author of *Lyric and Blake*, a novel about two African American female junior high school students who defy gender norms by wearing boys' clothes and dating girls.

The book follows their exploration of personal identity among the judgmental cliques in the student body.

One character, Astin Lyric Boyd, is a refugee from an elite prep academy. She enters seventh grade at Alcorn Junior High School only to encounter fashion wars and narrow-minded teachers. A girl who goes by her last name, Blake, befriends Lyric, and the two join forces to navigate their entry into adolescence in a hostile environment.

For Jones, the novel is intended to present characters with a strong sense of self who could be exemplars for young people who are grappling with sexual identity issues.

"It was very deliberate for me to make sure that I create characters who were self-assured . . . because they had a strong family network," Jones said. "In so much of middle school fiction you see children with low self-esteem issues, children who are battling bullying, and things like that."

In addition to LGBTQ issues, Jones is concerned with the impact of sleep deprivation on low-income children of color. The American Academy of Sleep Medicine maintains that African American youth have shorter sleep durations and more sleep fragmentation than other children. Researchers connect poor sleep patterns with aggressive behavior and lack of impulse control.

"Living in a hostile community where there may be a lot of crime, lights, and sirens can contribute to sleep deprivation," Jones said. "In addition to that, there are familial factors—a parent being out of the home and not being able to provide sleep routines, or living in a home where there's a lot of noise."

While Jones said that more research is warranted, some possibilities for future research include parental enforcement of regular sleep times, less time with electronic devices, later school start times, reduced homework burdens, and social workers assigned to schools to give educators guidance.

Tips from the WELL website (wellinstitute.com) for making a less stressful work environment include creating quiet spaces for focus, acoustic privacy in collaboration areas, sit-stand workspaces, and a pet-friendly office culture.

Brickey explained that the field of interior design is evolving rapidly with research and technology. Building upon her own field experiences, she has passed other certifications for interior design professional standards, evidence-based design, and sustainability. She uses her experiences to prepare students for future certifications.

Brickey said she appreciates how the special training includes information from health, medical, and scientific research.

"That kind of evidence-based design means that there's a lot of different people at the table very early on," she said.

The environmental movement's impact on the need for clean air and water has led, in part, to a new enlightenment about internal climates that promote healthy lifestyles.

Brickey said there also are pragmatic, bottom-line reasons for businesses to invest in WELL building philosophies.

"You reduce turnover, you reduce health care costs, and you reduce the implications for mistakes in the workplace if you have environments that are well designed," Brickey said.

Practicing What She Preaches

When an ice skater moves to the South, she finds that more of her neighbors prefer ice in their tea than under their feet.

Registered dietitian Lisa Sheehan-Smith, a professor in MTSU's Department of Human Sciences, didn't let that stop her—even in the pre-Nashville Predators era.

A 2018 profile for [espnW.com](https://www.espn.com) detailed how she took up her childhood avocation again at age 40 while working on her graduate degrees at Vanderbilt University.

Today, at age 59, Sheehan-Smith skates competitively, judges contests for a skating academy, and serves on the board of the Nashville Figure Skating Club.

While skating her way to a more active lifestyle, Sheehan-Smith promotes fueling that activity with healthy food.

In 2015, she secured a grant from the Produce for Better Health Foundation. In partnership with Kroger, MTSU's Nutrition and Food Science students and alumni enlightened community members about how to shop wisely for groceries.

"People can eat nutritiously even when they're really, really in a hurry," Sheehan-Smith said. "We rely too much on a heavily fast-food, processed food diet."

Last year's National Nutrition Month celebration on campus featured senior Dietetics majors mentoring their fellow students on smarter eating choices with the theme of "Go Further with Food: Fuel, Sustain, and Empower."

"We decided, looking at the underlying purpose of the national theme, that we would provide education on how to fuel bodies, promote getting more exercise into your daily life, and also teach the participants how to be more sustainable with their food consumption and purchasing," Sheehan-Smith said.

One of her former students, MTSU alumna Monique Richard, was named one of "10 Dietitians Who Are Making a Difference" by *Today's Dietitian* magazine in March 2018.

Far from resting on her academic and athletic laurels, Sheehan-Smith is going back to the future again by taking up another competitive activity she thought she had left behind—baton-twirling. [MTSU](#)



Lisa Sheehan-Smith



Bearing Witness and Affecting Change

CBHS creates a scholarship named for longtime faculty member

John Sanborn has been a staple at MTSU twice as long as some of his students have even been alive. Social work is second nature for Sanborn, and he appreciates the opportunity to continue to teach a subject that he holds dear.

With Sanborn now in his 46th year here, we sat down with the Social Work professor to talk about the changes he has seen on this campus.

How has this campus changed since you arrived in the 1970s?

The change that most impresses me is the diversity. You walk across campus now, and you hear many different languages and see people with different ethnicities from different places around the world. It was not like that in 1972. That diversity is brought into the classroom and makes our discussions alive and fascinating. There are certainly other differences: the number of students, all the new buildings, and the always-present cell phones. We didn't even have personal computers 46 years ago, so that has changed learning, work, and communication so much. It is the joy of all this diversity that really impresses me and pleases me. MTSU has become a melting pot of different people and wonderful ideas.

How has the study of social work evolved, and how has the Social Work Department changed?

Our teaching methods have evolved, partly in response to the changing student population and partly due to our, and my, greater understanding of how to teach. Lectures used to be the norm. Now, we have flipped classrooms, students are engaged in the community, and we facilitate classes with a lot of discussion and group learning activities. Social work education has been at the forefront of this evolution, as we have always had a community focus and been big on experiential learning. Now, with the MT Engage initiative, we are finding a confirmation of those teaching approaches and support that help us do it even better.

The college is starting a scholarship in your name for the department. Tell me a little about the scholarship and what you hope will be achieved through it.

I appreciate the fact that some of my colleagues have initiated this scholarship idea, and I hope it gets endowed so that we can offer more aid to our great Social Work students. This would allow a student or students to be able to work less off campus and spend more time and energy learning.

You have been a colorful and outspoken leader in your years on campus. If you could wave a magic wand and change one thing about MTSU—past or present—what would it be?

I guess by "outspoken" you mean that I have at times been critical of some of the issues that inevitably arise over a 46-year period and have had the temerity to express those opinions. My magic wand would be to allow teachers, professors, instructors enough time to spend on teaching the students and other professional activities important for tenure and promotion such as publishing, etc. There is a greater push for research now. It is true that research is necessary for good instruction, but too much of the research can take attention away from the classroom rather than supporting it. There's a very fine line that is not always easy to walk effectively to do what needs to be done in the classroom and out.

Sanborn is looking forward to another new year on campus, helping to train young minds on how to be successful and make a difference in the social work field. Over the years, he has touched thousands of lives passing through MTSU. If you would like to contribute to the John Sanborn Social Work Scholarship, you can do so at mtsu.edu/give and put Sanborn Scholarship as the designation, or contact Kristin Wells, development director, at kristin.wells@mtsu.edu or 615-898-2417.

A NEW POINT OF VIEW

Poverty simulation allows Social Work students to better understand hardships

Social Work students and faculty gathered to "Survive a 'Month' in Poverty" during a poverty simulation hosted by Rutherford County Schools' ATLAS program coordinator Kim Snell.

The simulation was designed to increase participants' understanding of what living in poverty means in a practical sense. The students struggled with the logistics of arranging child care, obtaining transportation, working, and visiting government agencies with too few resources. Individuals were assigned into "families" that included members appointed to participate as children or people with disabilities.

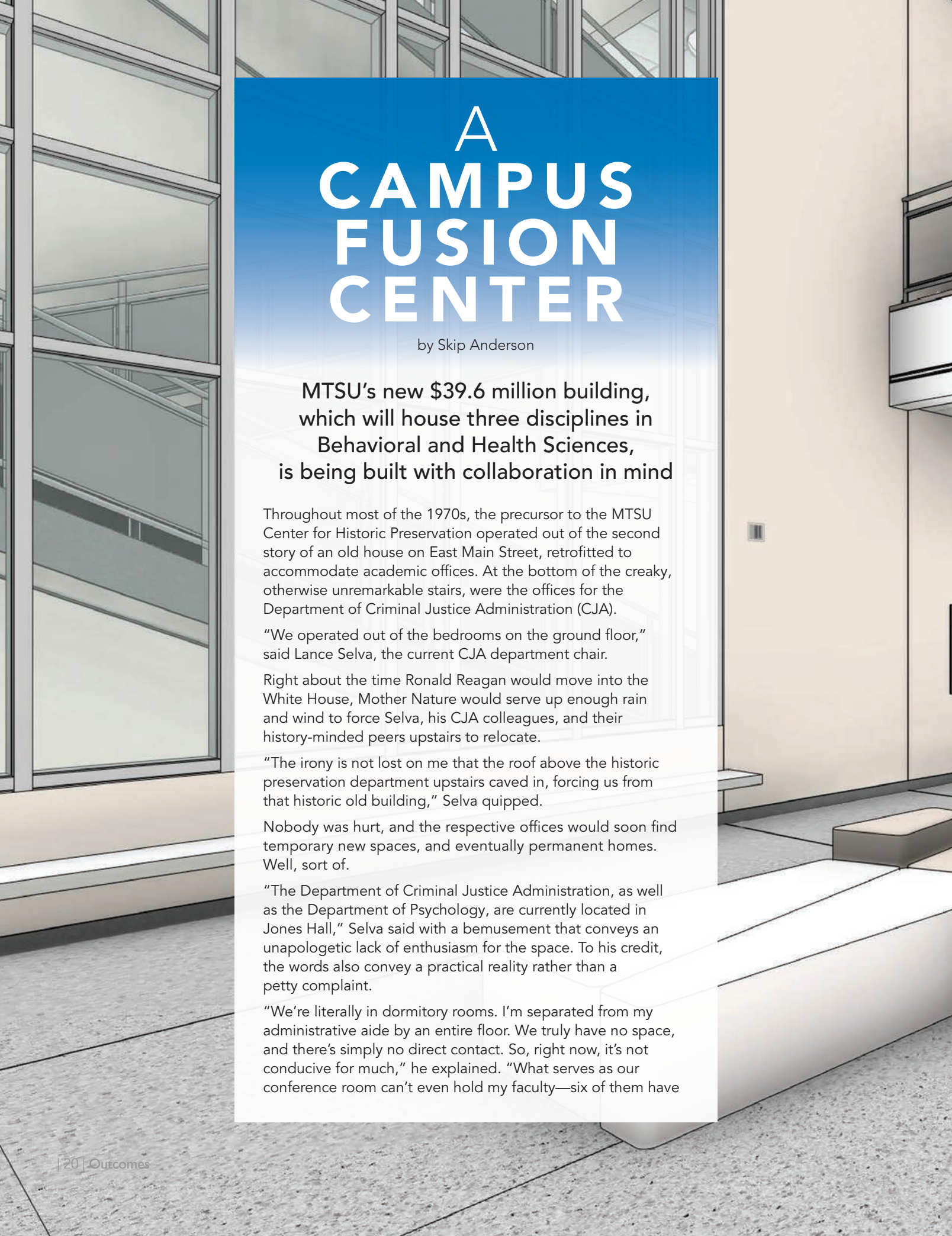
At one table a volunteer faculty member only spoke French while "selling" the frustrated students transportation vouchers, which they needed to get from place to place, in order to demonstrate the hardship for families that don't speak English as their first language.

Each interval in the simulation comprised a new week. By the "third week," many of the groups found themselves homeless, with unattended children in the custody of the jail, or having to choose which bills to pay.

While a few of the participants had lived in a similar situation, many voiced a better understanding of the emotional stress and difficult choices made by those living in poverty. [MTSU](#)







A CAMPUS FUSION CENTER

by Skip Anderson

MTSU's new \$39.6 million building, which will house three disciplines in Behavioral and Health Sciences, is being built with collaboration in mind

Throughout most of the 1970s, the precursor to the MTSU Center for Historic Preservation operated out of the second story of an old house on East Main Street, retrofitted to accommodate academic offices. At the bottom of the creaky, otherwise unremarkable stairs, were the offices for the Department of Criminal Justice Administration (CJA).

"We operated out of the bedrooms on the ground floor," said Lance Selva, the current CJA department chair.

Right about the time Ronald Reagan would move into the White House, Mother Nature would serve up enough rain and wind to force Selva, his CJA colleagues, and their history-minded peers upstairs to relocate.

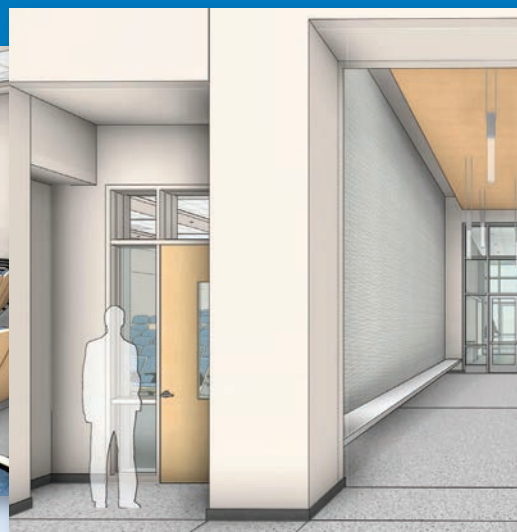
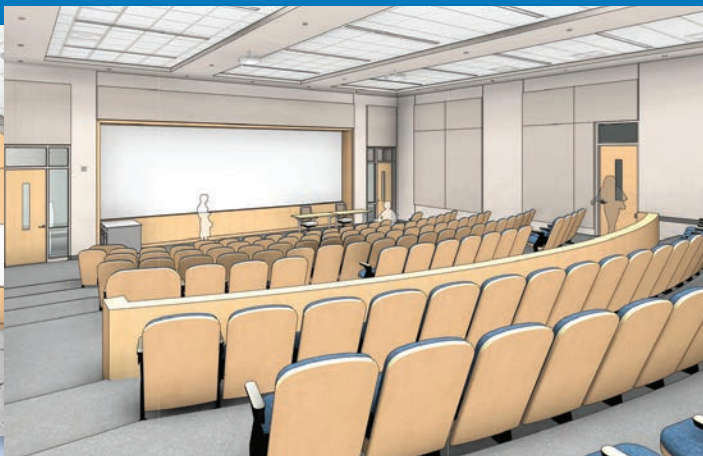
"The irony is not lost on me that the roof above the historic preservation department upstairs caved in, forcing us from that historic old building," Selva quipped.

Nobody was hurt, and the respective offices would soon find temporary new spaces, and eventually permanent homes. Well, sort of.

"The Department of Criminal Justice Administration, as well as the Department of Psychology, are currently located in Jones Hall," Selva said with a bemusement that conveys an unapologetic lack of enthusiasm for the space. To his credit, the words also convey a practical reality rather than a petty complaint.

"We're literally in dormitory rooms. I'm separated from my administrative aide by an entire floor. We truly have no space, and there's simply no direct contact. So, right now, it's not conducive for much," he explained. "What serves as our conference room can't even hold my faculty—six of them have





"We're talking about new technologies capable of securing the United States. That's where new jobs in the field will be created."

—Lance Selva, Criminal Justice Administration chair

to stand up when we're all in there. So, I hold my faculty conferences in the dining room of my home—it's twice as big."

The Department of Psychology doesn't have it any better. In fact, they might have even greater cause to kick their feet up on a therapy sofa and offload some woe (if only their cinder-block quarters offered space for a divan).

"I feel sorry for Psychology," Selva said. "They have a closet-size testing room that doubles as storage space for files and videos. Any way you look at it, we're all crammed into small spaces."

Collectively, CJA and Psychology have their eyes trained on 2020 when, along with the Department of Social Work, those three synergistic programs will move into a state-of-the-art, 91,000-square-foot building that will offer amenities that are, in their current configuration, unimaginable. It will afford the faculty and staff the basics—and beyond.

"My office will have a conference room where all my faculty can sit," Selva said. "And my administrative aide will be within walking distance."

Greg Schmidt, who chairs the Department of Psychology, will be happy to have his faculty and students all in a central location as well.

"Currently, faculty teach in classrooms spread across campus while our offices are in Jones Hall," Schmidt says. "We also have a classroom in the Alumni Memorial Gym that's below the volleyball courts while most of our classes are in the College of Education and Business/Aerospace buildings. This makes informal meetings to continue class

discussions or to follow up on research interests very rare." John Sanborn, associate professor of Social Work, concurs.

"The Department of Social Work is looking forward to our new, cohesive home. Due to the greater number of classrooms available, we will have more flexibility in scheduling classes, which will benefit student schedules and faculty workloads. Students will have much better access to spaces outside of class that will facilitate their interaction with each other and with faculty, and give them a better opportunity to be comfortable as they meet, read, study, and relax before and between classes," Sanborn said.

"The new, interconnected location of the Department of Social Work and the faculty offices will make it easier for students to be familiar with and locate their professors for help with coursework and professional advising."

New Capabilities

The need for these three departments to move into improved space is well documented, long established, and by all accounts undisputed. But it wasn't until a couple of years ago, when the Tennessee Higher Education Commission assigned the need to the top slot on its priority list, that MTSU officials began to believe relief might be on the way.

Then-Gov. Bill Haslam included the new academic building for MTSU in his 2018–19 budget among his recommendations for capital outlay projects for the state's public universities. The state committed \$35.1 million, and MTSU chipped in \$4.5 million, to build—at long last—a facility that offers classrooms, labs, and office space for these three departments. Campus officials expect the three-story building to be ready for classes by the Fall 2020 semester.

"We will have more flexibility in scheduling classes, which will benefit student schedules and faculty workloads."

—John Sanborn, Social Work associate professor



The perks that come with Selva retiring his dining table as an ad hoc meeting space notwithstanding, MTSU students will be the ones who realize the most tangible benefits offered by the forthcoming facility.

"We're going to be going beyond traditional criminal justice," Selva said. "We're expanding into homeland security and emergency management. And, this isn't just border-security stuff. We're talking about new technologies capable of securing the United States. That's where new jobs in the field will be created."

The new, high-tech building creates opportunities for enhancing the curriculum.

"We anticipate [new student spaces] will facilitate the kind of impromptu meetings and informal discussions that deepen the learning experience."

—Greg Schmidt, Psychology chair

"We're going to benefit in that new building with high-tech rooms," he said. "We'll be getting into predictive analytics. We'll bring in detectives to speak with the students, too. Can you imagine having an interrogation room where we'll have experts instruct our students on how to interview a suspect? That's going to be so valuable."

The new facility will also have a command center where Criminal Justice Administration students can practice coordinating and mobilizing resources when disasters strike.

"We'll be getting into emergency management and disaster-relief management, too. We'll be bringing in experts to help our professors teach the latest methods of coordinating resources," Selva said.

"We'll have a command center, for instance, that is an emergency-simulation room with 28 computers, multiple projectors, and four 80-inch monitors that

can serve as TV screens and computer screens, too. This will be hands-on learning, not abstract learning.

"We'll be offering modern approaches to learning and teaching that you just can't get from a textbook. There's a difference between reading about how to ride a horse and getting up in the saddle. A student who trains in our command center will be able to walk into any state-of-the-art emergency command center in the country, and they'll know what they're doing. They will have sat in that saddle before."

The Social Work and Psychology departments, which have areas of mutual interest, will be able to work more closely together than previously possible.

"With all three departments being housed in the new building, it will also facilitate interdisciplinary collaboration between Criminal Justice, Psychology, and Social Work," Selva said. "There's lots of overlap in our disciplines. The interactions of each department's students and faculties will simply be enhanced—we won't have to walk across campus anymore."

Such an environment will be ripe with opportunities for innovation, Schmidt said.

"In addition to our offices being in the same building as our classrooms, the new building will have large and small spaces for students to spend time before and after class," Schmidt said. "We anticipate these will facilitate the kind of impromptu meetings and informal discussions (among students or between students and faculty) that deepen the learning experience."

Selva agrees.

"Everything in this new building is geared toward learning, learning, learning," he said. "The opportunities offered by these new facilities are going to be amazing, and will set MTSU's students way ahead of a lot of people." [MTSU](#)

The Heart of Health Care

by Vicky Travis

Amidst a nationwide nursing shortage, MTSU's School of Nursing plays a pivotal role in serving middle Tennessee's hospital workforce

The list of accolades is long and impressive.

Hospital systems across the state line up to hire MTSU Nursing students before they graduate. Last year, 93% of those graduates passed their state board exams (the NCLEX) on the first try. From Fall 2017 through Spring 2018, the School of Nursing held site visits for not one, but three, program accreditations, all of which were granted. In January, the newest NHC Chair of Excellence in Nursing was hired. And, MTSU's master's program was ranked 15th in the nation among online nursing colleges for 2019 by SR Education Group. That strong ranking came about a year after the Master of Science in Nursing (M.S.N.) program became independent.

Perhaps past graduates of MTSU's School of Nursing say it best.

"MTSU is one of the top programs in the state for a reason," said Todd Vickrey, who earned his Bachelor of Science in Nursing (B.S.N.) at MTSU in 2004. "Everyone here is committed to producing the best nurses the country has to offer."

After seven years as a critical care and intensive care nurse, Vickrey started teaching at his alma mater as an adjunct professor. He earned his M.S.N. from the University in 2014 and has been on the full-time faculty since.

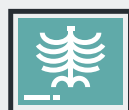
"We all care about our students, their desires, and the progression of their careers," he said. "We want to see them deliver great care to the patients in the community."

Tony Burch, a 2006 graduate who went on to earn his doctorate in nurse anesthesia practice, said MTSU prepared him well for the real world of nursing.

"That preparation came from the excellent didactic foundation along with the multiple clinical rotations provided at MTSU," he said.

Burch practices as a certified registered nurse anesthetist at a large downtown Nashville hospital and is an adjunct faculty member at MTSU.

Director Jenny Sauls' heart for the School of Nursing shows in the way she talks about the program's accomplishments, her faculty, and her





own experience as an MTSU Nursing student. Sauls said she is constantly reminded of how far the program has progressed since she started working at the University.

"I am proud of what we have accomplished as a team of individuals with a common goal—providing a quality education for future nurses," she said.

As a 12-year-old, Sauls fell in love with MTSU at band camp. "I never had a doubt that I would be a nurse and never had a doubt that I would be here," she said.

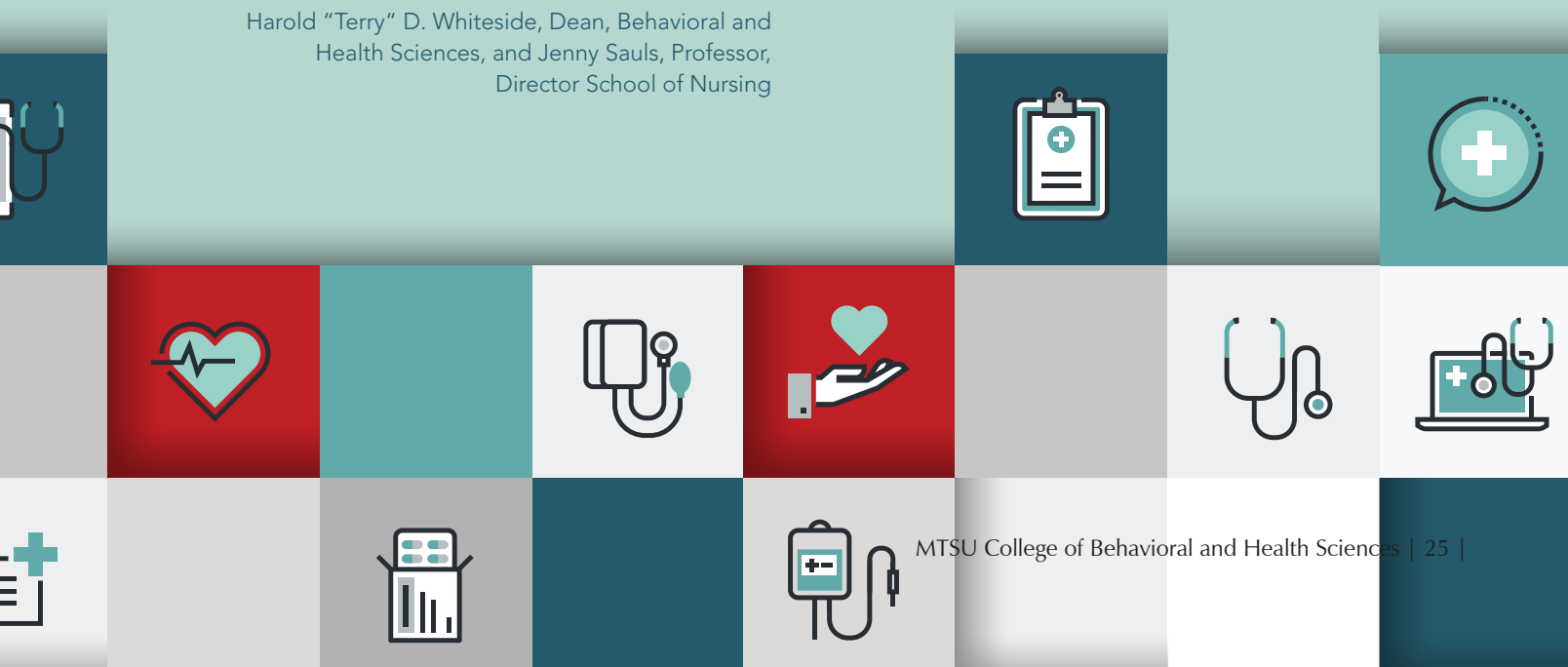
Sauls earned her associate's degree in Nursing from MTSU in 1981 and worked at DeKalb General in Smithville, her hometown. Later, she worked at the Alvin C. York Veterans Affairs Medical Center in Murfreesboro.

She earned her B.S.N. at Tennessee Tech, her master's from Vanderbilt, and her doctorate at the University of Alabama–Birmingham. Sauls has taught at MTSU since 1990, earning tenure in 1998. Named director in 2013, she still teaches critical care nursing.

"Critical care nurses have to have astute assessment skills and know that nothing is black and white. It's all gray," she said. "They learn



Harold "Terry" D. Whiteside, Dean, Behavioral and Health Sciences, and Jenny Sauls, Professor, Director School of Nursing





By the Numbers



200 hrs
spent
in clinical
simulation labs

500 hrs
spent
in community
care



64
Nursing students
admitted each
fall and spring



1,000
pre-Nursing
students

240
nurses
enrolled in
online master's
program



88%
have jobs
before
graduation



93%
passed state
board exam
on first try
in 2018

family interaction because a critical care nurse is taking care of the whole family."

Building Excellence

While there is a nationwide nursing shortage, there is also great earning potential, according to the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics. Nursing jobs are projected to grow 19% by 2022.

As School of Nursing advisor Sheila Withers puts it, these top students kiss their lives goodbye to study, study, and study more.

"It is hard," she told a group of recent would-be applicants. "It's very, very discipline-oriented. But people leaving our Nursing program work."



MTSU's Nursing program began in 1966 with the former two-year associate's degree. In 1988, the four-year B.S.N. started with seven full-time and three part-time faculty and shared space in a building with the agriculture department.

In 1994, the Cason-Kennedy Nursing Building opened with six classrooms and four clinical labs. As faculty increased to 22 total, the number of MTSU Nursing students jumped to 48 new admissions in fall and spring.

During the next decade, MTSU received a federal grant and grant monies from the Christy-Houston Foundation that added 25,000 square feet to the building. Today, the School of Nursing facility has five master classrooms, a computer lab, and six clinical labs with low-, medium-, and high-fidelity mannequins.

"It's real world in a safe environment," Sauls said. "The simulation labs bridge the gap from theory to practice."

MTSU joined a collaborative M.S.N. program online with five other Tennessee Board of Regents (TBR) universities in 2004. After the TBR structure changed in 2016 to a new local governing board at MTSU, the School of Nursing broke away to create its own independent master's program.

MTSU Nursing students have been well prepared for the state board licensing exam, with more than 90% passing the NCLEX on the first try for decades. In 2013, a perfect storm hit nursing schools across the country, however. The test was up for its three-year review by a national council, which changed the test blueprint. That same year, the passing standard increased. MTSU, like others across the country, saw its overall score drop.

Sauls, who had just been named director, faced the challenge head-on. Examining everything from admission standards to assessment strategies to curriculum, Sauls and her team took the opportunity not to only raise test scores but to make a good program great.



"Lots of programs across the country closed. And after 2013, it took a few years of struggle to get where we are now," Sauls said.

In 2017, the NCLEX pass rate at MTSU was 98%. Last year, it was 93%. The national average is 88%.

Higher admission standards were implemented in Fall 2016 at MTSU's School of Nursing, including requiring a minimum college GPA of 3.0 and a minimum HESI entrance exam score of 75%. But of those, the competitive students have a 3.6 GPA and an 86% score on the HESI. And students may apply only twice for admission. Curriculum was reorganized and the grading scale increased.

In 2017–18, the School of Nursing earned several accreditations. The Tennessee Board of Nursing gave full approval to accredit the M.S.N. program and reaccredit the B.S.N. program for eight years. The Accreditation Commission for Education in Nursing granted ongoing accreditation for the independent M.S.N. program. And the Commission on Collegiate Nursing Education accredited all programs.

It has become harder to earn one of the 64 nursing school spots now open each spring and fall at MTSU. That being said, the students who do make it through the five tough semesters know they have a very good chance of passing their boards on the first try and quickly finding meaningful work in an ever-growing field.

Dreams and determination set the School of Nursing up for more success. Sauls would love to be able to admit more than 64 students each semester. That would mean hiring more faculty and establishing more clinical sites. She would love to provide more than one track for the master's program and to offer a doctorate.

With hospital systems across the state lining up to hire MTSU Nursing students before they graduate, those dreams could indeed become reality. [MTSU](#)

First Chair

Deborah Lee relishes the opportunity to connect people and purpose as the new NHC Chair of Excellence in Nursing. The endowed professorship was established through a major gift from the National HealthCare Corp. to contribute to aspects of nursing education, practice, research, and leadership in the state of Tennessee and particularly in the mid-state area with regard to caring for the geriatric population in our community.

Lee, who was hired in January, brings strength and diversity of a long career to the position. She earned her A.S.N. and B.S.N. at Western Kentucky University, her master's degree at Emory University, and her doctorate in Nursing at the University of North Carolina. Lee has been a hospital and home care nurse, taught at various universities including Duke University, and held various roles in health care administration in the U.S. and Canada, including as administrative director of clinical education at Virginia Mason Medical Center in Seattle, a health care organization internationally recognized for implementing Lean practices in health care settings. She also is a National Board Certified Health and Wellness Coach and was in the first cohort to receive this credential in 2017. During 2014–18, she served as an instructor in the Duke Integrative Medicine Health Coach Professional Training Program, instructing in both the Foundation and Certification Programs.

Lee's research interests have focused on caregiving and caregivers. Her doctoral dissertation, for which she received a National Research Service Award from the National Institute of Nursing Research, explored home care for high-risk, technology-dependent infants. Most recently, her focus has been on nurses' self-care and caring for the caregiver. She developed and implemented a program to provide health coaching and mindfulness practices for nurse administrators in a Midwest hospital system. Over three cohorts of participants, there was overwhelming improvement in participants' perceived level of anxiety, self-compassion, and health indicators.

Within the MTSU School of Nursing, she is working to connect Nursing faculty with other schools and centers on campus for research opportunities, particularly regarding the aging community. Already, she has organized a new Positive Aging Consortium at MTSU, bringing together faculty members from various disciplines to collaborate and share resources for research, education, and community service.

"There is so much richness in connecting people across campus," she said. [MTSU](#)



PARTNERS IN CRIME

by Gina K. Logue

The long arm of the law now stretches all the way from the TBI to the MTSU Department of Criminal Justice Administration



Over the past few years, the Tennessee Bureau of Investigation (TBI) and the MTSU Department of Criminal Justice Administration have cemented a reciprocal relationship.

They've done so specifically through the TBI State Academy—wherein MTSU provides working law enforcement officials with even greater opportunities for professional development.

The TBI State Academy was created for officers who wish to enhance their skills and knowledge. Each attendee must have a minimum of five years of experience as a full-time commissioned officer of a Tennessee law enforcement agency to attend the academy. Academy students must make a five-days-a-week commitment for six weeks.

Fellow professionals and academic experts provide information in areas such as constitutional law, communications intelligence, financial investigations, and undercover work.

Ben Stickle, an MTSU assistant professor, said he and fellow Criminal Justice Administration

professors—once exposed to the academy—found the curriculum to be quite enlightening.

“We were highly impressed,” Stickle said. “Many of the individuals they bring in to speak are highly recognized in their fields.”

The department was so impressed, in fact, that TBI State Academy graduates now can receive up to 9 hours of undergraduate credit for their time at the academy if they enroll at MTSU. The credits are for courses in criminal investigation, crime scene investigation, and special issues in criminal justice.

MTSU offers a bachelor's degree in Criminal Justice Administration entirely online, with concentrations in Law Enforcement and in Homeland Security. A Master of Criminal Justice also is available online to accommodate working peace officers.

The relationship just keeps growing. For instance, when officers from local law enforcement agencies across the state graduated from the TBI State Academy in November 2018, MTSU provided them with digital cameras for taking photos of crime scenes.

“This would capture a much higher quality of picture,” Stickle said. “It would also allow them to do a variety of things that are necessary for crime scene photography, such as shooting in very low light and taking very close-up pictures of fingerprints and things like that.”

“It's always interesting when you walk into a room of cops to tell them that you were one of them and you can see the walls drop.”

COHRE VALUES

The Tennessee Bureau of Investigation isn't the only law enforcement agency in a meaningful partnership with MTSU's College of Behavioral and Health Sciences. The Center for Organizational and Human Resource Effectiveness (COHRE) at MTSU entered into a five-year partnership

with the Tennessee Highway Patrol (THP) in 2015 to revamp the agency's procedure for promotions.

Applicants for THP sergeant and lieutenant positions have their decisions and actions assessed on 15 job knowledge domains and 25 skills, abilities, and other job-related characteristics.

To develop the process, COHRE's

consultants and project associates from the MTSU Industrial/Organizational Psychology program spoke with 110 captains, lieutenants, and sergeants to learn their responses in various job situations and circumstances.

“The interviews were conducted to ensure a solid foundation for the development of a job-relevant, realistic, and effective promotional



A Career Boost

Why would law enforcement officers with years of practical experience find academic degrees useful?

The MTSU coursework focuses not only on criminal justice theory, but also on the leadership and management skills they will need to help their agencies progress and prepare for evolving trends in law enforcement and in society.

The era of requiring police officers to be little more than physically capable of breaking up a bar fight has gone the way of poodle skirts and cars with fins. Stickle, a former officer with the Bowling Green, Kentucky, police force, said there has been a push since the 1950s to get more college-educated police officers into the field.

“We are hoping to forge a partnership not only with TBI, but also with other agencies,” Stickle said. “These were officers from across the state, from an investigative background, and they were coming to a central location to receive some advanced training.”

The November 2018 academy graduating class included representatives of municipal police departments in Portland, La Vergne, Jefferson City, Crossville, Manchester, and Jackson; sheriff’s departments in Rutherford, Johnson, and Cumberland counties; and the Metro Nashville Airport Authority.

Stickle said his own law enforcement background helped him establish a rapport with the TBI State Academy students, taking the edge off of any possible resistance from those who might think an academic is devoid of real-life experience in the field.

“It’s always interesting when you walk into a room of cops to tell them that you were one of them and you can see the walls drop,” Stickle said. “They go, ‘Okay, this is somebody who knows and understands what I’m going through.’”

Stickle is not alone. Many MTSU Department of Criminal Justice Administration faculty members have experience



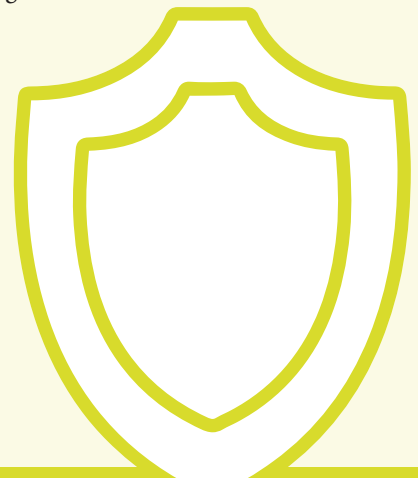
MTSU Police Sgt. Walter Spain instructs student during use of force simulation.

in police departments, probation and parole, juvenile justice, prosecution, criminal defense, corrections, the Federal Bureau of Investigation, and the Secret Service.

It’s a symbiotic relationship all the way around. Working professionals who attend the TBI State Academy have an opportunity to earn MTSU college credit.

MTSU students have access to people with experience in law enforcement careers both in and out of the classroom.

“We thought this was an excellent opportunity for the University and the TBI to work together to help promote training for police officers all across the state,” Stickle said. [MTSU](#)



process,” said Mark Frame, a Psychology professor. “In the critical incident interviews, we collected detailed information and specific examples about how THP lieutenants and sergeants do their jobs.”

The COHRE team used the job information collected in the interviews to create the two new components of the promotional process. The team

then developed work samples and situational judgment tests custom-made for THP. Frame provided a hypothetical example: “You’ve just pulled over a motorist. There’s a pungent smell of marijuana coming from the car. You want to search the car. You’ve called for backup, but you’ve been told that backup is 30 minutes away. What do you do?”

Candidates had to pretend to be a new sergeant or lieutenant opening up email and responding to various types of communications using their own words. Frame said the partnership saves THP money, improves the promotion process, and results in two state agencies working together for the common good. [MTSU](#)



by Drew Ruble

An Enriching Experience

More than three decades after bringing a cohort of Kuwaiti health care students to MTSU for summer enrichment, Adams Chair holder finds out just how impactful she was in developing that country's health care system

At the time of the close of World War II, Arab states like Kuwait were bereft with faltering economies. The discovery of oil changed all that. Over time, the country went from very poor to very wealthy.

Kuwaiti society would soon have the best of everything. What they didn't have was a population properly educated and trained in disciplines like health care.

Referred to as a fourth-world country—oil-rich economically but with human resources systems that were underdeveloped and poor—Kuwait had a health care delivery system that became the responsibility of expatriate workers. They came from a variety of countries, with varied levels of academic preparation, working with a population with whom they did not share cultural understandings and practicing their skills while communicating in at least a second language, English. It raised serious problems ranging, from worker conflict to differential skills and competencies to adjustment to Kuwaiti culture.

This is where Martha Jo Edwards, an MTSU professor who holds the Adams Chair of Excellence in Health Care Services, entered the picture. Edwards, a professor at the University of Central Florida at the time, was recruited to go to Kuwait as an external examiner of indigenous graduating seniors as they made the transition to serving their own people. Edwards, qualified from an international

perspective, served to guarantee the quality of the education and training was at the same level as, for instance, the British or the American system.

"Then, after first serving in an examiner role, they asked if I could come back and work with the different faculties—medical technology, physical therapy, health information management, radiologic sciences, nursing, and the like—and try and achieve some cohesion in the way they had developed their curriculum," Edwards said.

She did just that, living in Kuwait for 2½ years at one point.

Just a few short years into her involvement in Kuwait University's efforts, though, the Gulf War broke out. Iraq invaded the small country and occupied it.

"Here were all of these students that were in these different tracks of nursing, allied health and so on, and were in their third year of their studies. Iraq destroyed their university and destroyed their ability to finish their senior year and destroyed their health care system to a great extent," Edwards said. "Also, many expatriates working in the health care industry were vacated out of the country, so what you had was a real void."

Broadening their Education

Edwards arranged for 40 students from Kuwait University to eventually travel to Florida to finish the last year of their education at UCF, where she was still working at the time.

"We also recognized it was a real opportunity to see health care delivery in a new light, separate from my going over there," she said. "We now had the students here, and we could see then that their education was somewhat limited in their clinical practice there because the only thing they ever saw was how it was practiced in Kuwait. So it was good not only for them to finish the degrees they had started but also to have a summer enrichment program that would allow them to practice in a Western-style medicinal setting."

The following year, Edwards left UCF to become the Adams Chair at MTSU. She brought the Kuwait program with her and initiated a second annual summer enrichment project.

"It was 1992 when Kuwaiti students came to MTSU and were again exposed to a different model of health care practice," Edwards said. "MTSU faculty in Nursing and other health science areas mentored these students."

She said contracts with Vanderbilt University Medical Center, the Veterans Affairs hospitals in Nashville and in Murfreesboro, Baptist Medical Rehabilitation Center, Saint Thomas Medical Center, and others, allowed the students to get clinical experience in nursing, radiologic sciences,

imaging and nuclear medicine technology, clinical laboratory sciences, and health information management.

“These students had just gone through a horrible experience in the Gulf War,” Edwards said. “Many of them experienced being torn from their families and threatened with their lives. Then, to be trying to re-establish a mindset of ‘We are going to do this for our country; you can’t take our country from us,’ they suddenly now were more invested in their country than they had ever been before.

“They came over here and we put them in these clinical settings and let them practice for several months. It was a real eye-opener for them. For the first time, they thought ‘We can do this. This is not so foreign that we can’t make this work back home. We did it once; we can do it again.’ By being exposed, that ability to see it, they could envision it. It wasn’t external anymore, it was reachable. That’s the value of the enrichment. They begin to believe ‘Hey, we can do this.’ ”

Changing the Future

How far-reaching were Edwards’ efforts? In a recent visit to Kuwait University, Edwards met with the newly appointed dean of the KU Faculty of Allied Health Sciences. Edwards was surprised and pleased to be informed that many of the students who attended the summer enrichment program at MTSU way back in 1992 had continued their studies, completed doctorates, and had become productive faculty members at KU. In fact, around 30%–40% of the Kuwait University faculty were participants in that summer program at MTSU.

Edwards met with several of the MTSU alumni now serving on the KU faculty. She said they remember MTSU and their clinical experiences in the middle Tennessee health care community fondly and specifically reminisced about cultural experiences such as the Fourth of July fireworks in Nashville, Uncle Dave Macon Days in Murfreesboro, Opryland, and being hosted at Edwards’ farm.

“The dean espoused that I had made a significant difference in the health care system,” Edwards said. “She said ‘You changed the direction and the scope of what we can do and the direction of this college.’ I don’t get that kind of feedback often.”

No wonder Edwards calls the Kuwait project the “capstone event” in her career. (In addition to her work in Kuwait, Edwards has during her career been funded to do other significant projects, like work on AIDS and health issues



Martha Jo Edwards (l) with Dean Suad Al Fadhli of Kuwait University's College of Allied Health

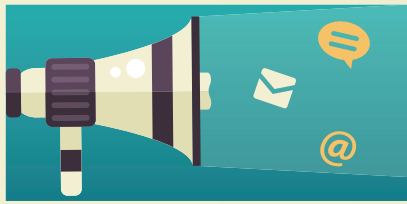
in the squatter settlements in South Africa through a USAID-funded project.)

“When 20 or 30 years later, you can go back and say ‘My word, look what good has happened, what was accomplished,’ it’s special,” Edwards said. “And the important part was that MTSU was willing to step up and take those students on and allow it to occur. It influenced how those allied health programs there have turned out.

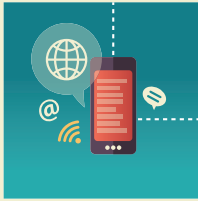
“As one finishes their career, it is rewarding to see that investments made even 30 years ago are still having an impact internationally.”

The relationship with Kuwait University is ongoing and will live beyond Edwards’ tenure as chair. Edwards is departing MTSU as Adams Chair this December. As part of her recent visit, she discussed possible new partnerships between KU and MTSU’s Center for Health and Human Services. Kuwaiti officials have been particularly interested in the MTSU center’s allied health supply-and-demand model, which would be modified for the Persian Gulf nation’s population.

“We discussed the potential for shared online courses in community and public health and student recruitment into MTSU’s Ph.D. and master’s degrees in Health and Human Performance,” Edwards said. “We also discussed their need for advanced post-primary certification in medical imaging, clinical laboratory sciences, and nursing and our role in facilitating a connection to those programs here in the United States.” [MTSU](#)



SNAPSHOTS



So many alums, so few pages!!! We couldn't possibly profile the incredible professional successes of our thousands of alums. Here are just a few examples of CBHS graduates creating meaningful outcomes worldwide.



Andy Haines ('04), who earned his master's in Exercise Science, was hired by the Chicago Cubs major league baseball club as the team's hitting coach. Prior to various stints as a coach on various minor and major league teams, Haines served as an assistant baseball coach for three years (2002–05) at MTSU.

Deborah “Debs” Brereton ('06, '11), a Physical Education, Health and Human Performance graduate and a native of Middlesbrough, England, was hired as head coach of the Idaho State University women's soccer program. Brereton previously served as associate head coach at Ohio University. She also spent three seasons as a graduate assistant on the women's soccer staff at MTSU. While working with the Blue Raiders, Brereton helped guide the 2010 team to the program's first Sun Belt Conference tournament championship and NCAA Tournament appearance. She played the 2004 season at MTSU, where she was the Sun Belt player of the year. Brereton earned first-team all-conference, all-tournament, and all-region that year. She finished the year ranked fifth nationally for goals scored with 19. After her collegiate career, Brereton played in the Women's Premier Soccer League during 2006–10. She suited up for the Nashville Lady Blues, Hampton Road Piranhas, San Diego Sunwaves, San Diego United, and Fort Wayne FC.



DEBS BRERETON

IDAHO STATE SOCCER HEAD COACH



Sheppard Pratt Health System recently appointed **Laura Lawson Webb** ('91, '95), M.S.N., RN-BC, as the new vice president and chief nursing officer responsible for the organization, planning, direction, and evaluation of all nursing functions. Sheppard Pratt is the largest private, nonprofit provider of mental health, substance use, developmental disability, special education, and social services in the country and is consistently ranked as a top national psychiatric hospital by *U.S. News & World Report*. Lawson Webb, who earned both her Nursing and Psychology degrees at MTSU, has nearly 30 years of behavioral health experience, most recently as the interim chief nursing officer for Vanderbilt Psychiatric Hospital. She also taught at Vanderbilt University School of Nursing.



Deanna Grubbs ('95), of Hendersonville, was recently promoted to vice president of apparel product development at Johnston & Murphy, a wholly owned subsidiary of Genesco, where she focuses on the apparel company's retail growth and expansion into wholesale channels. Grubbs began her career with Johnston & Murphy in 1999 in the marketing group focused on wholesale and public relations.



Ayana Ife ('15), a Textiles, Merchandising, and Design graduate, who gained international notoriety following a runner-up finish on Bravo Television's *Project Runway* fashion design competition, recently embarked on the next exciting chapter in her life as a fashion designer. Ife's niche was and is that she specializes in creating fashions for modest women that are not dowdy or cumbersome. Last January, she relocated to Milan, Italy, to study at the Milano Fashion Institute, where she earned a partial scholarship to study fashion and learn more about the business side. Ife originally received acceptance into Milano Fashion Institute just prior to her tenure on *Project Runway*, and the Institute held her spot. With direction from MTSU's Tennessee Small Business Development Center, Ife has been working on a business plan and focusing on the commercial side of the fashion business.



Better by Degrees

MTSU's Board of Trustees in April recommended adding master's degree programs in speech-language pathology, public health, and biomedical sciences. MTSU has offered an undergraduate degree in Speech-Language Pathology and Audiology for 50 years and is one of only a few universities offering an undergraduate clinical practicum. A master's degree is required for licensure as a speech-language pathologist. New degrees will need approval by the Tennessee Higher Education Commission.

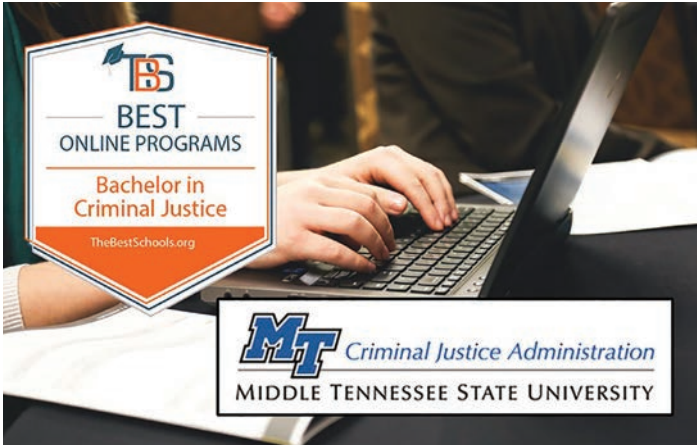
mtsuneews.com/board-of-trustees-april-2019



Focus on Positive Aging

A group of MTSU faculty with similar interests, expertise, and knowledge around aging and older people have launched a new interdisciplinary Positive Aging Consortium at the University. Organized by Deborah Lee, who took over the NHC Chair of Excellence in Nursing in January, the consortium will draw on a wide variety of disciplines at MTSU to collaborate and share resources for research, education, and community service.

mtsuneews.com/positive-aging-consortium-launch



Online CJA B.S. Ranked Among 50 Best

Ranked No. 37, MTSU's program offers an online Bachelor of Science degree in Criminal Justice Administration through the CBHS with support from University College. TheBestSchools.org, which tries to connect prospective students with available online degree programs, states that it reviewed all accredited online Bachelor of Criminal Justice degree programs in the U.S. to select the Top 50 programs in the nation.

mtsuneews.com/online-criminal-justice-ranked-2019



Intensive Sleep Research

MTSU's Center for Health and Human Services (CHHS) has formed a research partnership to highlight the importance of sleep quality in the overall health of Tennesseans and that of the nation. An academic partnership between MTSU, the Sleep Centers of Middle Tennessee, and a growing group of community partners, the new Sleep Research Consortium is the brainchild of Cynthia Chafin, CHHS associate director.

mtsuneews.com/sleep-research-consortium-2019

Leave a Legacy at MTSU

**You can make a difference, outright or through
your estate plan, at your University.**

Did you know you can even pre-designate areas or programs you'd like your gift to benefit?

Consult an attorney, but the language often can be as simple as:
"I hereby give, devise and bequeath to Middle Tennessee State University Foundation
the sum of ____ or the property described as ____ or ____% of my estate."

Contact Development Director Kristin Wells for more information:
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