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COVID-19 efficacy survey accessible through the QR Code

**Faculty conduct survey on COVID-19 vaccine attitudes**

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Faculty members conducting a study on perceptions of COVID-19 vaccine efficacy and safety are encouraging both the University and the Calloway County communities to participate.

The four faculty members involved in the study have backgrounds in public health, nursing and statistics. The idea came from Azaher Molla, an associate professor in the public and Community health program. "The completion [rate] of vaccine is low here," Molla said. "We wanted to know the determinants, what are the determinants, why people are very reluctant to actually get the vaccines."

The survey was originally set to finish in April but has continued because of low response rates. Elizabeth Gordon, co-author of the study and director of the public health program, said she believes the study is still relevant despite this extension.

see **SURVEY**, page 2



Lovett auditorium is set for a grand opening in October 2022, after being under construction since Spring 2021.

Dionte Berry/The News

**Campus construction, renovations set to update academic buildings, housing**

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The fall 2022 semester will mark the beginning and completion of multiple campus construction projects that will advance student community spaces, accessibility and on-campus living.

Lovett Auditorium will have its grand opening during October, Curris Center construction has just kicked off and phase one of Private Public Partnership (P3) housing construction is set to be zoned off in December.

Jason Youngblood, the director of Facilities Management, oversees all of these projects "We've got several projects we've been working on," Youngblood said. "Lovett will be opening this fall, we are working on a

Wrather Hall makeover ... the Curris Center is another big project. The first part they'll be working on will be the old post office area, renovated to be the new student involvement area."

Lovett Auditorium's grand opening is set for Homecoming week on Oct. 28. The auditorium has been undergoing renovations since the spring 2021 semester. Some of the major improvements to Lovett Auditorium have been new seating, a new HVAC system under the stage, new windows and new curtain drapery.

When Lovett Auditorium is finished, Youngblood said construction will focus on the Curris Center.

Youngblood said Lovett needed to be up and running before work on the Curris Center continued because a lot of events were

relocated to the Curris Center after Lovett construction started

Both Lovett Auditorium and the Curris Center are central to the Murray State community, and President Bob Jackson said he is excited to see them both elevated.

"Murray State is already competitive, and this is a special place—I firmly believe that—and we are enhancing those competitive components," Jackson said.

Regarding all of the construction, \$47 million was appropriated from the government to Murray State during the 2022 Kentucky Legislative session, and Jackson said Murray State added more money to the appropriation to make up for \$60 million for campus construction.

see **CONSTRUCTION**, page 2

**Racer alumni launch podcast discussing campus history**

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"Hey Racers!" is the first thing listeners hear when they tune into the Racer Alumni Podcast: "Stories from the Finest Place We Know."

The podcast is hosted by Carrie McGinnis, director of alumni relations, and Jordan Lowe, a 2019 mass communications graduate.

Lowe was inspired to start the podcast after his Advertising Capstone class with Robert Valentine, who challenged his students to boost and advertise the Centennial Celebration. Then he presented the idea to his advertising professor, Gil Welsch.

"The podcast [idea] didn't come to me until after I graduated in 2019, and then COVID broke out," Lowe said. "I started listening to podcasts, and then I was thinking, since I just worked out a Centennial Celebration project with the school, it would be interesting if someone could do a podcast with Murray State."

McGinnis, who has a background in broadcasting, said she was hesitant to start a podcast.

"I was afraid I didn't know how to make it unique and stand out among the others, so it was a real leap of faith and a personal risk," McGinnis said.

The podcast is recorded on the eighth floor of Fine Arts or on Zoom, depending on the guest's location.

In addition to being a host, McGinnis edits the podcast together and mixes the sound. McGinnis said with her experience, it can take her two to three hours to edit one episode.

"While I'm recording, in my head and maybe even on a sheet of paper next to me, I'm thinking about what needs to stay, what may potentially go if we have to cut for time," McGinnis said. "I have in mind on the front end what I want it to sound like."

McGinnis said the podcast is a great way for alumni all across the country to engage with the University.

"We spend a lot of time and energy making sure that our events are of interest to a broad alumni audience, and this breaks the barrier of location



Episodes from 'Stories from the Finest Place We Know' can be found at murraystate.edu/podcast.

and allows us to bring in those who maybe don't live in the area or who haven't been to campus in a long time," McGinnis said. "It seemed like a perfect fit for our centennial year."

McGinnis and Lowe write questions prior to each interview to help with the flow of the conversation and ensure it feels organic.

"I want to make sure that the flow is there and we're not talking over each other or asking questions

we've already asked," McGinnis said. "If I know where I'm going with a couple of questions, or if he knows where he's going with a couple of questions, you don't want the other one to then totally derail the conversation onto something else, so it's good to have an outline from the beginning of what that conversation should look like."

see **PODCAST**, page 3

**SURVEY, from page 1**

“[COVID-19 is] something that people are probably going to have to be vaccinated on a regular basis against ... just like they are the flu, and so I think it just underscores how important it is to understand [the community] and take the temperature of the community,” Gordon said.

Gordon said the study aims to develop a better approach in helping patients feel more comfortable with vaccines.

“I think in order to combat vaccine hesitancy or unavailability, we have to understand what exists,” Gordon said. “The end goal is better patient communication.”

Lauren Roberson, director of the nutrition program and assistant professor in the School of Nursing and Health Professions, said the study aims to determine where people are seeking information about vaccines.

“We want to know if they’ve declined a vaccine other than COVID, because that can be telling, and their perception of the severity of COVID-19,” Roberson said. “So if someone were to get COVID and not be vaccinated, how serious do they think that illness could be?”

According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, 71% of the U.S. population had at least one dose of the COVID-19

vaccine as of Dec. 6, 2021. At Murray State, the reported vaccination rate is 61% according to the vaccine cards submitted on MyGate, and the rate in Calloway County is 53%.

The authors of the study have not yet analyzed the data they have collected. However, according to the literature so far, they have found common reasons cited for and against COVID-19 vaccination.

Vaccinated participants cited their own health, the health of loved ones and the wider community and a desire for normalcy as reasons for their status, among others. Unvaccinated participants included reasons like fear, negative experiences with healthcare providers, logistical issues and difficulty of access.

Unvaccinated participants were asked to share what would motivate them to vaccinate. Common responses included an increase in community risk levels, requirement by an employer, membership in an at-risk group and more information about the vaccine.

Roberson said the survey’s current 107 responses do not account for a good proportion of the Murray population.

“We’ve done Listservs. I think we’ve done the Racer Nation Information once. Elizabeth [Gordon] has talked to folks in the health department,” Roberson said. “We do have a drawing for a \$50 gift card, so that introduces bias in of itself if people are motivated to participate because of that.”



Photos courtesy of the authors from the study

Top: Elizabeth Gordon and Gopal Nath, Bottom: Azaher Molla and Lauren Roberson.

Gordon acknowledged she and her colleagues are trying their best to minimize bias in the survey.

“If someone thinks it’s important to take the survey, they might be the same type of person who thinks it’s important to get a vaccine,” Gordon said. “So, I think we definitely run that risk, and that’s our challenge now.”

To combat this challenge, Gordon encouraged the University community to participate in the survey if they have not already done so.

“This is an opportunity to be involved in research and science,” Gordon said. “This is a way to give back, to help us understand what the current challenges are and to come up with better solutions.”

The anonymous online survey, comprising 15 questions, takes less than five minutes to complete. Participants who volunteer their contact information are entered in a raffle for a \$50 gift card.

The survey can be accessed by scanning the adjacent QR code or by visiting [https://murraystate.co1.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV\\_7OJvKwAi1xI0L6m](https://murraystate.co1.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV_7OJvKwAi1xI0L6m).

**CONSTRUCTION, from page 1**

With a deeper dive into Curris Center construction on the horizon, student life is bound to be interrupted, but Youngblood said construction will be set in phases to make sure students are able to navigate the the Curris Center

“We are not just doing everything at once. Much of it will be done at night so that we do not impact traffic,” Youngblood said. “We’ll break that down into half at a time to where you can walk on this half while they’re renovating one half [of] the corridor and then split it up, and there may be times where students have to take alternative routes.”

In regards to construction impacting the flow of student life, Jackson said these impacts are not happening without reason.

“Yes, it’s going to impact parking, or it may burden us a bit in regard to how we get around in the Curris Center,” Jackson said. “Over the next 12 to 24 months, there’s going to be great enhancements made to this campus, and basically every building on this campus, for the most part, will be touched with this money in some form or fashion for improvement purposes.”

Along with total reflooring there will be minor renovations to the front doors and windows of the Bookstore, exterior renovations to the elevators to hide the inner workings and the inclusion of more student spaces.

Beyond the Curris Center, another project on the horizon is the P3 housing construction project.

Over the summer, Springer Residential College was razed to make way for the new dining hall, and the green space across from Hart College will make way for two new residential colleges.

Youngblood said the projects would not begin until December 2022 to minimize the impact construction will already have on student life.

Micheal Arnal-Brown, a junior mathematics major who has been a student on the P3

committee, said he’s excited for the project to begin.

“I believe this will bring our already nationally accredited campus to the next level,” Arnal-Brown said. “It will bring beautiful additions to the residential college system that will offer a home-like environment while keeping our notion of affordability.”

On the committee Arnal-Brown is tasked with representing both prospective and current students’ perspectives regarding construction plans.

Arnal-Brown said he believes revamped housing will strengthen student retention and community building.

Jackson also expressed excitement for the P3 housing plans.

“It will enhance students’ [experiences] and educational experiences,” Jackson said. “It’s positive for our faculty and staff, but most importantly, from the standpoint of recruiting, student recruiting and student retention. All of this work that I’m describing is vitally important to recruiting and retention of students.”

Along with the bigger renovations and construction projects, Mason Hall and Oakley Applied Science Building are set to have renovations in order to be compliant with the Americans with Disabilities Act and therefore more accessible.

Youngblood said Oakley Applied Science has small bathroom doors, and Mason Hall has a wheelchair lift rather than a ramp alongside the stairs.

A current construction project that students may pass on their way to class is the National Panhellenic Plaza being built right outside of Waterfield Library. The plaza will be a monument set to commemorate the historically Black fraternities and sororities that are on campus.

Amid all the construction Youngblood said he understands that the construction can impact students’ normal day-to-day lives.

“Be patient with us as we make changes to campus,” Youngblood said. “The more construction the better because it shows that we are making improvements on our campus.”



Top: Rendering of the Curris Center construction plans. (Photo courtesy of Shawn Touney)

Middle: The razing of Springer Residential College over the summer break. (The News)

Bottom: Rendering of the two new residential colleges that are set to be north of Hart College. (Photo courtesy of Shawn Touney)

# Beyonce highlights queer Black culture in 'RENAISSANCE'

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With the COVID-19 pandemic, recurring social strife and recent Supreme Court decisions, summer was marked by strains of negativity. American singer-songwriter and Grammy-acclaimed artist Beyoncé Knowles found an escape from the mudslide of negativity in the creation of her seventh solo album, "RENAISSANCE."

"Creating this album allowed me a place to dream and to find escape during a scary time for the world," Knowles posted on Instagram. "It allowed me to feel free and adventurous in a time when little else was moving."

"RENAISSANCE" was released on July 29, and it doesn't just show Knowles' take on dance music but also her appreciation for club, house and bounce music as well as shining a light on the queer Black origins of these subgenres.

To further embrace queer Black creativity, Knowles widely uses samples crediting the origins of the dance subgenres she uses.

Knowles doesn't just rely on the foundation that was already made by queer Black creatives, but she also injects her own confidence and sexual agency paired with her wide array of vocals, from the singing we are familiar with to rapping.

"I'M THAT GIRL" is an assertive start to the 16-track album. The track starts with a greatly used interpolation of "Still Pimpin'" by Tommy Wright III and Princess Loko which builds a sense of confidence and intimidation.

Knowles asserts that she's "that girl," and it's not because of the diamonds, pearls or designer clothes that line her closet. "I'M THAT GIRL" does a great job of introducing us to "RENAISSANCE."

The beginning of "COZY" instantly draws me in with the lyrics "This a reminder," which instantly cuts to a clubby house beat. Knowles does a large amount of rapping, reminding people she's cozy with who she is and no one can shake that.

"COZY" is infectious, I would love to hear in the club.

"ALIEN SUPERSTAR" has an ethereal edge to it, and Knowles is describing a woman that has too much to offer for this world and

treasures uniqueness. The track also features some ballroom inspiration featuring lyrics revolving around ballroom "categories."

"ENERGY" begins with a groovy sound with American artist BEAM rapping the chorus. Knowles comes on with politically and socially fueled lyrics that compares "Karens" to terrorists and how "45" needed to go, referencing former President Donald Trump.

From its groovy start, "ENERGY" develops a more stripped back Afrobeats sound as the song progresses, which works great to support Knowles' lyrics.

"BREAK MY SOUL" was the lead single that gave listeners a taste of house and bounce music. Freddie Ross Jr., professionally known as Big Freedia, the pioneer of bounce music, ad-libs in the background which gives the song a more dancelike energy.

"CHURCH GIRL" isn't as Godly as its title suggests. Knowles raps over a club beat, talking about church girls and partying and dancing down on Saturday before going to church on Sunday.

When the song picks up, a repetitive pitter-patter takes up the background of the song, making for a dance climax.

"MOVE" has clubby Afrobeats and a mix of Knowles rapping, with her vocals more blown out in parts while her rapping is more sensual and whispery. The lyrics detail a club atmosphere where Knowles and her girls need some space to dance and have fun.

"HEATED" starts like none of the other tracks with a warped isolated guitar intro which transforms into a clubby Afrobeat. Knowles sings and ad-libs in



Photo Courtesy of beyonce.com

"RENAISSANCE" was released on July 29 and is the first album of a trilogy Knowles has planned.

the background with an assertive rap.

Knowles references her Uncle Johnny with the lyric "Uncle Johnny made my dress." Knowles dedicated her 2019 GLAAD Award to her uncle who died of AIDS, according to a post her mother Tina Knowles-Lawson made on Instagram.

Referencing the lyric where Knowles mentioned Johnny, he actually did make Knowles' prom dress.

"THIQUE" has a contained dance energy with a heavy bass that picks up toward the middle with synths accompanying Knowles' vocals, which has grown from rap to singing.

"AMERICA HAS A PROBLEM" starts with an assertive low beat that puts an emphasis on Knowles' rapping. Even though the song is dominated by Knowles' vocals, the song still has a clubby dance feel.

"PURE/HONEY" pays homage to ballroom, a Black and queer subculture, and it's apparent in the first second of the track with the iconic ballroom clap that reappears throughout the song.

Toward the middle the track transforms from rap to singing, and the beat is accompanied with brass and wind instruments.

A sample of Moi Renee's "Miss Honey" closes out the track.

Finishing up the album is "SUMMER RENAISSANCE," a synth-based house track with a raplike finale. Overall the song makes references to

earlier house and club music and does a great job of closing out the album.

"RENAISSANCE" is the act of escapism that we need. We are constantly bogged down with negative news. After being subjected to a pandemic for nearly three years, we want to dance and we want to have fun, and Knowles did a great job of capturing that.

"RENAISSANCE" has also served to bolster the conversation about sampling in the music world, which has recently become more popular. Sampling began as a way to interpolate a piece of music into another because of a lack of access to personal instrumentation.

Music reviewers and people who feel the need to post their opinion on social media compare it to copy and paste, but I don't think the samples dampen the creativity and personal touch Knowles has put on "RENAISSANCE."

All of the samples are well thought out and work seamlessly with Knowles' sound. Listeners should not hyper-focus on figuring out where a certain sample originated from but instead see how it's been taken to inject new life into another project.

"RENAISSANCE" deserves a nine out of 10 and marks a powerful return of Knowles after her critically acclaimed 2016 album "Lemonade."

On her Instagram Knowles said "RENAISSANCE" was only Act I of a supposed trilogy, so I am excited to see what she has in store for us.

## PODCAST, from page 1

Lowe said research is an important part of the writing process.

There are currently four episodes of the podcast. Guests include campus administration, like President Bob Jackson and Jeff McLaughlin, director of special collections and exhibits at Pogue Library. Other guests on the podcast are located across the nation — like Jabir Walker, a referee with the National Football League and the National Collegiate Athletic Association and W. Earl Brown, an actor in Hollywood, originally from Murray, Kentucky.

Lowe said the variety of guests featured will hopefully spark more interest in the podcast.

"It really broadens our interest in the alumni population and the student population because everyone has a different major," Lowe said. "Someone who's a theater major might listen to the actor, and someone who is a biology major would listen to someone who is in the science field."

McLaughlin said he is confident the interest in Murray State's history is present among the community.

"I was helping with move-in last week and just greeting parents," McLaughlin said. "I couldn't even count the number of people who said they're dropping their kids off, and they're telling me about how they used to live in this building in the 90s, how their parents went here and were intricately tied into the fabric of Western Kentucky."

McLaughlin said since the book is informative, he thinks it will reach a broad audience.

McGinnis said it was important to highlight the history of the University in the episodes.

"It made sense that our very first guest would be the president ... he's an avid history buff, especially when it comes to the history of this institution," McGinnis said. "A historian was a great second follow up, and [McLaughlin] had access to some great stories that you wouldn't know unless you've been researching the last 100 years of Murray State."

McGinnis said this podcast is unique because of its particular interest to all individuals affiliated with the University.

"We're going to keep you updated on things that are happening on campus," McGinnis said. "We're going to give you an idea of some of the really cool things that your fellow alumni are doing that you wouldn't know about otherwise.. It's just another level of involvement in addition to local events, social media, email and all the different ways that we interact with our global alumni population."

McGinnis said her goal is to produce two episodes a month and reevaluate in a year.

"I want to make sure that if we're going to put the time and effort into something that it's a great product," McGinnis said. "It's something that people want to listen to and tell their friends about, and that we're getting the listenership to return on that investment."

The next episode of the Racer Alumni Podcast will air Thursday, Sept. 1 with Nico Yantko, director of athletics, as the guest.

## Episode 1 — July 1, 2022



Join us in celebrating our [Centennial](#) throughout the remainder of 2022.

The Racer Alumni Podcast launches July 1, featuring the 14th President of Murray State University and 1985 alumnus Dr. Bob Jackson. We will discuss his long history with Murray State dating back to his time as a student and the many roles he has held leading up to his presidency. We'll also chat about his experience leading the institution through a global pandemic and the University's 100th birthday celebration, including the upcoming release of a pictorial history of Murray State, which he co-authored, *The Finest Place We Know: A Centennial History of Murray State University, 1922-2022*.

[PRE-ORDER THE BOOK →](#)

Photo Courtesy of murraystate.edu/podcasts  
 Episodes one through four of the podcast can be seen at murraystate.edu/podcasts

To listen to the podcast, visit [www.murraystate.edu/podcast](http://www.murraystate.edu/podcast) or wherever you stream your podcasts.

# Our View:

## Pregnant women need healthcare, not laws

Picture this: a 15-year-old girl decides she wants to adopt a baby. She says that she is completely prepared to adopt and knows she would be a perfect fit for adoption. Obviously, people understand that, despite her claims, she would not be fully prepared to adopt and would not be able to care for the baby properly.

Sure, this scenario seems absurd, but this is the reality our nation began to face in June with the overturning of *Roe v. Wade*. While it is still illegal for 15-year-olds to adopt, it is completely legal for them to give birth and be expected to care for the baby, usually with little preparation or assistance.

Unfortunately, girls even younger than 15 are seen as “too immature” for an abortion but apparently mature enough to care for a baby. This is shown in the case where a 10-year-old girl had to travel to Indiana from her home state of Ohio for a procedure after she became pregnant as a result of rape.

This is not the only absurd circumstance that exists from the overturning of *Roe v. Wade*. Women with health conditions surrounding pregnancy are also being forced to carry their baby to term despite health risks to both the parent and unborn baby.

One example of this is a woman in Texas who was forced to carry a dead fetus for two additional weeks because of the health policies in Texas surrounding abortion. Another woman was forced to carry an unborn child to term despite being told it would be alive for a couple of hours before spasming and ultimately dying.

Doctors now have to make the decision between life and death for their patients, and sometimes that can come at the cost of people going septic or developing fatal blood clots. Because certain states do not have a policy for protecting people when complications are detected, doctors have to wait until the complications becoming fatal and hope it is not too late.

On June 24, our entire country saw the overturning of *Roe v. Wade* through the decision in *Dobbs v. Jackson Women’s Health*



Wesley Hammer/The News

*Organization.* This left the decision of abortion care up to individual states, rather than ensuring health clinics available nationwide to assist people in crisis situations.

The right of individual states to make decisions about these laws may seem harmless, but they are not when many people face miscarriages, health issues beyond their control, poverty and many more pregnancy-related conditions.

At *The News*, we believe people will be increasingly less likely to receive care for medical conditions and complications because of pregnancy. Because doctors are more restricted by law on how to aid their pregnant patients, people will be more likely to die or face ongoing medical problems.

We also believe children will be more likely to be neglected or face unsafe situations as a result of parents being forced to have children despite not having the financial resources to do so. Additionally, even if children are placed into foster care, there is a possibility they will be placed in abusive or impoverished homes due to the over 500,000 children in foster care.

One way to aid the need for health resources would be to actually provide resources for these pregnant people. As a country, we cannot expect the rate of abortions to go down just because we have laws against them. These laws are only stopping the safe abortions from happening and preventing people from receiving proper medical assistance.

Medical assistance and support is not the only thing we could do better as a country. In the U.S., we have a lack of education when it comes to sex education in schools. According to the National Library of Medicine (NLM), the U.S. ranks first among developed nations in rates of both teenage pregnancy and sexually transmitted diseases.

The effort to reduce these rates by implementing abstinence-only education has actually had the opposite effect. The same study conducted by the NLM found that states with more abstinence-only programs had higher rates of teen pregnancy, STDs and abortions among teenagers.

If we continue to implement programs that provide a lack of

education about topics like teen pregnancy and abortion, we will continue to see a need for services that currently are not being offered by our government.

The main solution to this problem is listening to concerns from people affected. Currently, our Supreme Court and legislative bodies are making decisions about people they have little knowledge about. Not only are they taking away the voices of those affected, they are taking away our necessary health resources and blatantly ignoring our concerns.

These new laws can be extremely difficult to work around. People should never have to make the choice to die or give birth to a stillborn baby. Children should not be forced to give birth, yet this is the reality we are facing. Despite medical research and knowledge increasing in the U.S., we seem to be going backward in terms of medical care and accessibility. Why should a person have to wait to be on their deathbed before receiving necessary treatment?

We must encourage our friends to vote as if their lives depend on it. Someday they might.

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Sophomore quarterback DJ Williams looks to lead the Racers to victory following his 2021 Freshman of the Year performance.

Photo courtesy of Dave Winder/ Racer Athletics

## Preview: Football readies for last OVC journey

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The Murray State football season is just around the corner, and with it being the Racers' final season in the OVC, fans can expect some fireworks from the team this fall.

In spring 2022, Murray State and the MVFC announced the Racers will be joining the conference in fall 2023, meaning the Racers have one more shot at OVC championship glory in football.

Following a promising 5-2 finish in the spring 2021 season, the Racers were picked to win the OVC in the fall 2021 season. While the Racers were unable to come away with the trophy in the fall of that year, they still finished with a 6-5 record, marking back-to-back winning seasons in the first two seasons under Head Coach Dean Hood.

Now, heading into the 2022 season, the Racers are picked to finish third in OVC standings in their final year with the conference.

The roster saw changes over the offseason, including the trans-

fer of junior quarterback Preston Rice, sophomore offensive lineman Jacob Vance and sophomore cornerback Marcis Floyd.

Other notable players graduated following the fall 2021 season, including wide receiver Malik Honeycutt, inside linebacker Jacodi Hearn and running back Rodney Castille.

However, of the 11 players named to All-OVC teams in the fall 2021 season, seven players have returned for the 2022 season. All seven have been named to the 2022 All-OVC Preseason Team. Of the seven includes 2021 OVC Freshman of the Year sophomore quarterback DJ Williams, who steps into the official starting quarterback role this season.

Sophomore running back Demonta Witherspoon, senior wide receiver LaMartz Brooks and senior offensive lineman Levi Nesler will join Williams on offense for the All-OVC Preseason Team Stats Performed also named Nesler to the Preseason All-American list.

On defense, the Racers listed senior outside linebacker Darnel Victor and senior inside line-

backer Eric Samuta on the All-OVC Preseason Team. Senior defensive lineman Nate Chambers, a transfer from Division II Hillsdale College, was picked as an OVC "Newcomer To Watch," adding to the force on the defense.

Murray State opens its 2022 campaign with a trip to Lubbock, Texas, to take on their first FBS opponent of the year, the Texas Tech University Raiders. Kickoff is set for 7 p.m. on Saturday, Sept. 3.

The Racers' first home game is on Sept. 10 against former OVC rival Jacksonville State University. The matchup against the Gamecocks is set to kickoff at 6 p.m.

The Ball State University Cardinals, the second and final FBS team on Murray State's schedule, will host the Racers on Sept. 17 with kickoff set for 1 p.m.

Murray State opens the conference season with a home game against the Eastern Illinois University Panthers on Sept. 24 at 4 p.m., then travels for another non-conference matchup against the 17th-ranked Southeastern Louisiana Lions on Oct. 1 at 6 p.m.

After hosting 18th-ranked

UT Martin in their second conference matchup of the season on Oct. 8, the Racers travel to face another former OVC rival, the Austin Peay Governors, on Oct. 15 at 3 p.m.

Following a conference matchup at Lindenwood to take on the Lions on Oct. 22, the Racers return to Roy Stewart Stadium for Homecoming, hosting the Tennessee State Tigers on Oct. 29 at 2 p.m.

A bye week for the Racers precedes the final non-conference matchup where Murray State hosts the Robert Morris Colonels for senior night. The game is set for Nov. 12 at 1 p.m.

The Racers final game of the season takes place in Cape Girardeau, Missouri, where the Racers take on the SEMO Redhawks in the last OVC matchup of the year. Kickoff is set for 1 p.m.

With a projected third place finish and plenty of tough opponents, as well as old foes, 2022 will prove to be an interesting year for Murray State football. In their last year in the OVC, the Racers look to capture conference championship glory on their way out.

## Preview: Volleyball takes on the MVC in 2022

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School is back in session, meaning the Racers' volleyball season is right around the corner. The Racers are going to face some new competition this year, as they are one of the newest members of the MVC. Murray State's switch to the MVC from the OVC took place in July. With the switch, the Racers' volleyball team will be on the hunt for their fourth NCAA-Tournament appearance under Head Coach David Schwepker.

Libero Emma Kailiponi and outside hitter Alysha Smith are the returning seniors for the 2022 season. One of the newest Racers is graduate middle blocker Elisa Dozio, who is also a member of the Racers' departing class this year.

The Racers begin their season with back-to-back games in Evansville, Indiana, to take on the University of Southern Indiana Friday, Aug. 26 at 6 p.m. and Saturday, Aug. 27 at 2 p.m.

The Racers will then move

on to play in a trio of invitationals. First, the Racers travel to Lynchburg, Virginia for the Liberty Invitational where the Racers will play the Winthrop Eagles at 11 a.m. and UNC Wilmington at 2 p.m. on Sept. 2. Murray State will finish its first invitational against Liberty University on Sept. 3 at 3 p.m.

The Marshall Invite hosted by Marshall University starts on Sept. 9 where the Racers will compete against Charleston Southern University at 11 a.m. and Kent State at 3 p.m. Murray State's final game of the Marshall Invite will be against The Herd of Marshall University at 12:30 p.m. on Sept. 10.

The final invite is the Samford Invite. The Racers matchup against the Clemson Tigers at 2 p.m. on Sept. 17 and the Samford Bulldogs at 2 p.m. on Sept. 18.

The Racers open their MVC journey with their first two home games of the season. First, Murray State hosts SIU at 6 p.m. on Sept. 23, then it hosts the Missouri State Bears at 7 p.m. on Sept. 24.

The Belmont Bruins come



Photo courtesy of Racer Athletics

Senior outside hitter (#18) Alysha Smith heads into her season with championship hopes.

to Murray on Sept. 27 to play the Racers at 6 p.m. Later that week, the Indiana State Sycamores come to town to play at 6 p.m. on Sept. 30.

Before a long road game skid, the Racers will host the University of Evansville at 5 p.m. on Oct. 1. The Aces of Evansville found success last year going 21-12 overall.

Murray State won't host another volleyball game until Oct. 21 when they play Bradley University at 6 p.m. in Racer Arena.

The Racers will then host the Illinois State Redbirds at 3 p.m. on Oct. 22. Illinois State went 13-5 in MVC play last year, 19-14 overall.

The University of Illinois Chicago will then head

to Murray to play in Racer Arena at 6 p.m. on Nov. 4.

The Racers' final home game of the season will be against the Valparaiso Beacons at 3 p.m. on Nov. 5. The Beacons went 12-6 last season and had the best overall record in the MVC going 26-10.

The MVC Tournament will take place in Evansville, Indiana, at the Meeks Family Fieldhouse and will last from November 20-23.

As Head Coach David Schwepker enters his 24th season, keep an eye out for the Racers to make a good first impression on their new conference. The Racers had a strong season last year going 18-12 overall and will look to build off of that success this year after only losing three seniors from last year's squad.



Photo courtesy of Racer Athletics

Senior midfielder Lauren Payne reads to lead the Racers in her final go around on the pitch in 2022.

## Preview: Soccer prepares for new conference

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The Murray State Racers soccer team has already begun play, losing their first two contests.

The Racers traveled to Ruston, Louisiana to play the Techsters of Louisiana Tech University on Friday, Aug. 19. In their season opener, 2021 All-OVC junior midfielder Hailey Cole scored the 700th goal in the program's history. Despite the milestone, the Racers fell 1-2 after a Louisiana Tech penalty kick in the 74th minute that decided the game.

The Racers then came back home to take on the Georgia State University Panthers on Sunday, Aug. 21. The Racers lost the match 0-2 and are still on the hunt for their first win.

The Racers have eight seniors on their 2022 roster, seven of which were on 2021's squad when the team finished 9-8-1. The seniors are goalkeepers Jenna Villacres and Jamie Skarupsky, defenders Katie Bickers and Saraya Young, midfielders Lauren Payne and

new transfer Grace Bodker and forwards Marti Floyd and Parker Greer. Payne was second on the team last year in both goals and total points. She will be looking to continue her success on the field as the Racers take on some new competition.

In years prior, the Murray State Racers competed in the OVC. Now the Racers have a new challenge ahead of them—the MVC. The switch to the MVC was made in July 2022 when the Murray State Board of Regents officially accepted the MVC's invitation.

The Racers are primed to go far this season under Head Coach Matt Lodge. The soccer team has seen success under Lodge, and he's been recognized for it, winning 2020-21 OVC Coach of the Year.

With a new conference comes new competition, and the Racers look to make a lasting first impression on their new conference rivals.

Murray State will travel to Cincinnati, Ohio, to take on the University of Cincinnati Bearcats at 1 p.m. on Sunday, Aug.

28. The Bearcats went 7-7-3 last season and will be a tough matchup for Murray State.

On Sept. 4, former OVC rival UT Martin will travel to Murray for a matchup at 1 p.m. UT Martin had a solid season in 2021, going 11-6-1 and making it to the OVC finals, where they lost. The Racers will host their last out-of-conference matchup against the University of Oklahoma Sooners, who went 8-11-1 last season. The matchup will be at 1 p.m. on Sept. 4.

Murray State will host Belmont at 3 p.m. on Cutchin Field to kick off their inter-conference play on Sept. 22. The Racers will then travel to Evansville, Indiana, to take on the University of Evansville Aces at 1 p.m. on Sept. 25. They will host the Indiana State Sycamores at 3 p.m. on Sept. 29. The Sycamores went 6-2 in conference play last year and had the best record out of all of the teams in the MVC.

Fellow MVC newcomer, the University of Illinois Chicago Flames, will come to town for another game on Cutchin Field

at noon on Oct. 2 to give the Racers back-to-back home games. The Racers will then travel to Springfield, Missouri, to play the Missouri State Bears in an evening bout at 6 p.m. on Oct. 6.

The Illinois State Redbirds will travel to Murray on Oct. 9 at 1 p.m. in the Racers' second half of conference play. The Racers then travel to Carbondale, Illinois, on Oct. 13 to take on the SIU Salukis at 6 p.m.

In its final home game of the season, Murray State plays host to the Valparaiso Beacons on Oct. 16, with kickoff set for 1 p.m.

The Racers will head to Cedar Falls, Iowa, to take on the University of Northern Iowa at 3 p.m. on Oct. 20. They will end their season with a showdown in Des Moines, Iowa against the Drake Bulldogs on Oct. 23 at 1 p.m.

Murray State has been picked by coaches around the league to finish third in the MVC this season. The Racers dominated the OVC under Lodge with a record of 32-3-5 in his four years. As Lodge enters his fifth year, his team will look to continue their success in the new conference.

## Murray State Esports looks for new members

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As students make their way to Murray State for the new school year, many will be looking for new clubs and organizations to join.

With the recent rise of gaming since the start of COVID-19, many may be looking for a place to play video games with like-minded people, or maybe even compete.

For those interested, Murray State Esports has been active on social media in hopes of recruiting new friends and players to join the fun.

"We are always looking for new people to join, no matter your skill level," said sophomore Jake Perry, lead manager of the organization. "We offer a casual experience for those just looking to have fun, or a competitive group to really show people what you've got."

While in the past it was considered a club, the team now has backing from faculty, officially making the Murray State Esports Team a possibility.

As for what is offered in the Esports arena inside the Collins Center for Industry and Technology Building, Perry offered some insight on the various activities of the group.

"We have different teams that compete in tournaments for various different video games," Perry said. "However, we also have casual gaming events as well. We play Mario Kart, Super Smash Bros. We'll get a group together to play Overwatch. We really cover the spectrum of both casual and competitive gaming on campus."

A total of eight games are offered for Murray State's competitive scene, including Counter Strike: Global Offensive, Valorant and Overwatch. Perry added there are some newcomers to the lineup this year.

"In the past, we've had teams for Rainbow Six Siege, Rocket League, Valorant, League of Legends, Overwatch and Counter Strike: Global Offensive," Perry said. "Starting this year, we've also added Call of Duty and Super Smash Bros. as well. So for the competitive scene, there's something for everyone."

Events happen often, with tournaments happening once a semester for each team and casual events happening at least twice a month.

For those interested in joining the Esports Team, visit @murraystateesports on Instagram and Twitter or visit the team's page on Facebook. The team's official Discord can be found at [murraystate.edu/esports](https://murraystate.edu/esports).



Photos courtesy of Murray State Esports

Above: The Murray State Esports Organization hosts many events throughout the semester.

Below: The Overwatch team competed in a tournament towards the end of spring 2022.



# Professor discusses SCOTUS abortion decision

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After the conclusion of the United States Supreme Court's landmark 2021-2022 term, Associate Professor of Political Science Paul Foote is leading several presentations about the Supreme Court's opinion in *Dobbs v. Jackson Women's Health Organization*.

Foote's first presentation was hosted on Monday, Aug. 22 at Pagliai's Pizza and Italian Restaurant. Foote also will be presenting at the Department of Political Science's annual Constitution Day celebration this semester.

In the *Dobbs* decision, the Supreme Court decided in a 6-3 vote to uphold a Mississippi law banning abortion after 15 weeks of pregnancy, and in a 5-4 vote to overturn the constitutional right to abortion established in cases *Roe v. Wade* and *Planned Parenthood of Southeastern Pa. v. Casey*.

Foote opened his discussion of the *Dobbs* decision by posing a question to his audience.

"Why, after 49 years, would the U.S. Supreme Court decide to overturn one of the most decisive, controversial issues of our time?" Foote asked. "I believe what explains this monumental change in constitutional law is the ascent of originalism."

Originalism, as defined by the Merriam-Webster Dictionary, is "a legal philosophy that the words in documents and especially the U.S. Constitution should be interpreted as they were understood at the time they were written."

The philosophy of originalism was at one time commonplace in Supreme Court decisions, Foote explained.

"In the 19th century, Supreme Court rulings predominantly featured originalist arguments," Foote said. "In the early to middle part of the 20th century, originalism fell out of favor in the U.S. Supreme Court."

One factor Foote attributes to originalism's return is the formation of a group known as the Federalist Society.

"It was not until 1982 [that] the Federalist Society for Law and Public Policy was founded, and they



Paul Foote leads a discussion on the Supreme Court's *Dobbs v. Jackson Women's Health Organization* at Pagliai's on Monday, Aug. 22.

were founded [so] that original thought could make a comeback," Foote said. "In 2020, the Federalist Society included 70,000 members. That is a lot of lawyers [and] jurists that believe in this type of thinking and believe that it should dominate."

The Federalist Society explains on its website that the organization "is a group of conservatives and libertarians interested in the current state of the legal order." Foote says that this organization has influenced Supreme Court decisions because many of the current Supreme Court justices have been associated with the organization.

"All of the judges on the *Dobbs* majority are current or former members of the Federalist Society," Foote said. "Six of the nine on the current Court have been influenced by the originalist school of thought."

Foote presented some of the key points illustrated in the opinions written by the justices who sided with the Court's majority. One of the critical points Foote discusses comes from the opinion of Justice Clarence Thomas.

In his opinion, Thomas calls for the elimination of substantive due process, which according to Cornell Law School's Legal Information Institute is "the principle that the Fifth and

Fourteenth Amendments protect fundamental rights from government interference."

These fundamental rights have been interpreted by the Supreme Court in the past to include the right to use contraceptives decided in *Griswold v. Connecticut*, the right to marry a person of a different race decided in *Loving v. Virginia* and the former right to abortion decided in *Roe v. Wade*.

"Really what he is saying here is that we should never even have gotten involved in these relationship rights, [that] we should have stayed in economics," Foote said. "He says in future cases he calls for the Court to reconsider these

precedents like *Griswold*."

The presentation closed with Foote discussing the dissenting opinion authored by the three liberal justices Sonia Sotomayor, Stephen Breyer and Elena Kagan.

"They claim the majority has thrown away the balance between when states can regulate and a woman's right to have an abortion before viability," Foote said.

Those interested in learning more about the Supreme Court's philosophical changes and the decision in the *Dobbs v. Jackson Women's Health Organization* case can follow the Department of Political Science on Facebook for news on the Constitution Day discussion.

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## Racers Empower host Ice Cream Social



Students play Jenga at the Racers Empower Ice Cream Social hosted on Monday, Aug. 22.

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Aiming to help foster relationships between students, faculty and staff, Racers Empower hosted a back-to-school Ice Cream Social in the Waterfield Library Breezeway.

The event was "an opportunity for students, faculty and staff to come together, get to know each other and have an ice cream treat," according to a statement from Racers Empower. Attendees also played lawn games like cornhole to kick off the new semester.

Sophomore biology major Claudia Ebbecke said the event seemed well-received.

"There were lots of things to do," Ebbecke said. "It was a very nice event and was perfectly refreshing on such a hot day to sit in the shade and eat an ice cream sandwich."

Racers Empower is a collaborative effort by students, faculty and staff, who aim to help students practice good habits for their mental health and wellbeing. Meetings have included healthy snacks, games and pet therapy to reduce the stigma surrounding mental health.

Racers Empower meets from noon to 1 p.m. on the last Monday of every month in the atrium of Alexander Hall. All members of the University community are encouraged to attend.

Dionte Berry/The News

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