



THE MURRAY STATE NEWS

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THE MURRAY STATE NEWS

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Students help with mental health

Shelby Bloomer

Contributing Writer

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The Green Bandana Project sees its second semester at Murray State, where it continues to provide mental health training to students and faculty.

Introduced to campus last spring by the Counseling Center and sponsored by Murray State's Quality Enhancement Program, "MSU Matter: Racers Care," the Green Bandana Project consists of a 90-minute training session educating participants about campus mental health resources, how to identify someone who may be struggling with mental health issues and how to properly assist them. Those who complete the training receive a green bandana to signify their participation in the project and their ability to help others.

"My hope is (that) in the future, Murray State's campus will be covered with green bandanas," said Latitia Usher, a trainer for the program. "Where many if not all students on campus will know how to access the Murray State mental health resources available, feel more comfortable reaching out to ask for help and offer help when they see someone struggling and be proactive in raising mental health awareness for others."

While not much has changed about the program this semester, new facilitators have joined the project, where they present the training, guide conversations and connect students with resources.

"As an assistant professor in the department of computer science and information systems, I see every day how technology, especially AI, is reshaping the way we learn, work and even experience community," Jason Owen said. "While these tools hold incredible promise,

they also bring new pressures and challenges for students. That's why projects like the Green Bandana Project are so important. They remind us that behind every innovation and every line of code, there are human beings whose well-being must come first."

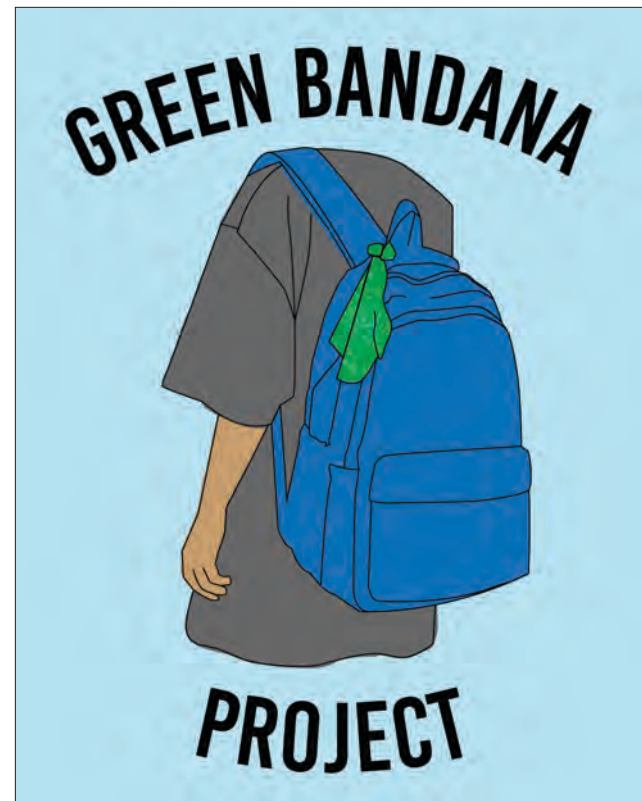
All Resident Advisers and First Year Leaders were required to complete the training. Some faculty on campus have also chosen to integrate the project into their courses, like Holly Bloodworth, an early childhood and elementary education instructor.

"When I heard about the Green Bandana Project, I thought it would be a great addition to my EDU 486 class," Bloodworth said. "Teaching is about so much more than academics. The information gained from this program will help my students build classrooms where everyone feels safe, heard and supported. Teachers need to understand how to support their students' mental health and know what community resources are available."

Students in Bloodworth's class said the training provided meaningful insight into the struggles many students face.

"The Green Bandana Project was such an impactful training that opened my eyes to the mental health struggles people go through every day. I walked away with a toolbox full of strategies to be a supportive advocate of mental health in the community," said Chloe Mackey, a junior majoring in learning and behavior disorders in the elementary education track.

The next open training is 3-4:30 p.m., Monday, Sept. 22, in the Tennessee Room of the Curris Center. The link for the sign-up can be found in Racer Nation Information newsletter



MacKenzie Rogers/The News

Anyone who is interested in participating in the Green Bandana Project is encouraged to contact the Counseling Center director, Angie Trzepacz, at atrzepacz@murraystate.edu to get the process started.


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Thefts rack up into the thousands Students' year-old robberies come to light

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The theft of a Sony camera, lens, 4 HP all-in-one computers and more stolen items from the Murray State Art Department, Bookstore and the Murray Walmart involved several University students. One of them attempted to frame an innocent student and is currently serving a felony sentence.

Bethanie Bailey, a former studio art major, was charged with shoplifting over \$10,000 - under \$100,000 and theft by unlawful taking over \$1,000 - under \$10,000 over the course of the 2024 fall semester.

Bailey and others were accused of stealing a total of \$13,069 from Aug. 20 to Oct. 26, 2024,

Those others, detailed as co-suspects in arresting officer Richard Allen Mehlbauer's affidavit, are Katie Hart, Isebel Bolanos and Cheyenne Pender.

When the art department reported the theft of the Sony camera on Oct. 28, Bailey's name was given as a potential suspect as she was recently fired from being a student worker for "unrelated reasons."

In Mehlbauer's affidavit, while codes to the equipment's locked storage area had been changed, Bailey was seen inside by another student, Catrena Kovaloski, and later was seen having possession of the camera.

According to the affidavit, Bailey and Katie Hart were taking pictures on campus and later noticed that a camera was missing from the storage but did not report it. Later, Isebel Bolanos told Kovaloski that



Bethanie Bailey

Bailey was stealing "multiple carts full of items from the local Walmart."

"This information and statements were corroborated from Walmart Loss Prevention personnel who were able to provide me with camera footage for four separate days, which show a female subject (that) matches Bethanie Bailey's description and that of (Hart, Bolanos and Pender) and leaving the store with shopping carts full of items which were not paid for," Mehlbauer wrote. "This was also corroborated by MSU Bookstore staff who were able to confirm multiple losses by their business consistent with those items seized and surrendered."

A search warrant for property stolen by Bailey, Hart, Bolanos and Pender tallied up to 123 items. The co-suspects surrendered the items.

On Oct. 29, Bailey was brought in for questioning and asked if she had the stolen camera in her possession. She stated she didn't, but knew its location, saying a graphic communications major had the camera.

In the affidavit, the art department states Bailey had not requested to borrow the aforementioned camera, nor did she have authorization.

"Bailey states she removed the camera for a (GCM student), so that he could borrow (it)," Mehlbauer wrote. "Bailey initially stated she had no knowledge of the Sony cameras being in the locker until she was told about them by (him)."

Mehlbauer's affidavit continues saying (the GCM student) was brought in and was asked about the camera. In his written statement, he had no knowledge of borrowing a camera or lens from anyone and said he had not had any contact with Bailey outside of saying hello in the hallway and when she texted him unusually.

"Text messages indicate (GCM student) had no knowledge of borrowing a Sony camera and show Bethanie Bailey asking (GCM student) to lie to police about having the stolen camera," Mehlbauer wrote.

In court, Bailey pleaded guilty to her charges, and in a defense motion to reduce her bond, she is autistic, someone who suffers from PTSD, ADHD and "a variety of other mental health concerns, which make it easy to manipulate her."

"Defendant is a pliable young lady who has fallen in with people who have held sway over her and have manipulated her to allegedly commit offences which she would not otherwise ever consider," the defense motion read.

Since March 17, 2025, Bailey currently serves a pre-trial diversion, a program that places her under supervision rather than traditionally convicting her, for five years.

Nicole Hand-Byrant, dean of Fine Arts and Humanities, said the security of the department's facilities remains a priority since Bailey's theft.

"The department is committed to keeping the equipment and facilities secure," Byrant said. "The department continues to enforce and review safety protocols so students can access the resources that support their learning. The department takes security seriously."

Ads Club partners with NFL for contest

Ethan Allen
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The Murray State Ads Club kicks off the new semester with a new massive advertising campaign for members to craft.

Every year, the Ads Club is tasked with creating an ad campaign for a renowned brand. The final product could compete in the National Student Advertising Competition, with the winner's campaign being used by the client.

This year, The Murray State Ads Club is working with the NFL.

Derek Hess, Ads Club vice president, said this project will be a blast to work on.

"This campaign includes the creative strategy, media writing, video/graphic production and so many more parts of an ad campaign," Hess said. "Last year, we did a campaign for AT&T, specifically targeting Gen Z consumers and how to influence them to change their phone

plans." Hess said this is one of, if not the best, ways to experience making an ad campaign for a client while in school. However, the Ads Club is more than just a competition.

Gill Welsch, Ads Club adviser, said the experience students earn from their involvement in Ads Club will benefit them in their future careers.

"(Students) can have an easier time getting an internship or have an easier time getting a job interview and eventually the job," Welsch said.

Welsch also said students should get involved in Ads Club because members get to create fellowship and make friendships that last a lifetime.

For Welsch, he said that he doesn't care about the trophy, but rather creating a project students can build upon by participating all four years of their college career.

Ads Club meets in 115 Wilson Hall at 5 p.m. every Tuesday. All students are welcome to join.

THE MURRAY STATE NEWS

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Parking reaches ADA concern

Public records show University's profit from parking revenue

River Murt
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The parking situation at Murray State continues to see closed off lots and struggles for students and faculty to see classes.

The issue now affects folks with disabilities.

Theatre professor Lissa Graham's career will be ending due to pain management and the University's issues with accessibility. Graham said she's had to cancel classes as accessible parking is scarce.

"I've seen the trucks for the (Jackson Hall) construction area use multiple handicapped parking to load and unload," Graham said. "I've been told if they do that to report it, but honestly that doesn't help in the short term when you are trying to get to work."

Diane Nititham, a sociology professor, said while the closure of Education Loop parking and the purpose of the pedestrian barriers for construction is necessary, it is hindering the academic ability of Faculty Hall, Fine Arts and Oakley faculty.

She also said such grief has existed before the construction of Jackson Hall.

"The availability of disabled parking was already a problem," Nititham said. "I know of a few faculty members who have limited mobility that find it even more difficult to enter the buildings they need to. As a disabled person myself, I am also finding it challenging to get to my building, and have to build in time to rest and recover once I get to my office before I have to teach."

Graham agreed with Nititham's comment.

"For 30-plus years we have had no disability entrance to Johnson Theatre," Graham said. "A place where the public gathers and where my office resides. There is no handicapped accessibility to the stage or dressing rooms in Johnson Theatre. There is no easy way to get from stage to the auditorium in Lovett. To go to the auditorium, you have to go outside between Lovett and Faculty Hall. If I were in the auditorium and needed to go onstage I would need to leave the building. In Lowry, you need to go down the ramp on the far left side of the building. Then if you need to go up, you have to travel all the way to the other side of the building to use the elevator."

Additionally, there is no accessible entrance into Pogue Library.

If a person with disabilities wanted to enter the building, they would have to go the same route to get into Lowry, take the elevator to the second floor and cross a walkway from Lowry to Pogue.

From there, that person has to ring a bell before a locked door where a Pogue staff member would then have to go and allow entrance.

Graham said she's fortunate to be able to retire at the end of the year, but it will cost her final pay raise installment and will lessen her Social Security and retirement benefits.

"Our campus may meet ADA standards, but it is not handicap friendly," she said.

Kaylea Greene, a freshman pre-vet major, said while she does not require accessible parking, she finds the University only cares about money when those with wheelchairs or medical problems have to park close but can't.

"Overall I have been starting to feel like they care more about the money they are getting from each student rather than their parking needs," Greene said. "And they have gotten a lot of money from those who pay \$200 when there's not enough spaces to park. They are overselling parking spots they don't have."

Greene said she gives Murray State the benefit of the doubt as colleges have issues with parking. But she also said the logic of zoning the intramural fields as red parking, commuter parking, is strange. She said it should really be yellow, or dorm parking, as the fields are next to Lee Clark for example.

Greene asks why would commuters be parking in a red zone when they have really no reason to be near Lee Clark.

Students are frustrated.

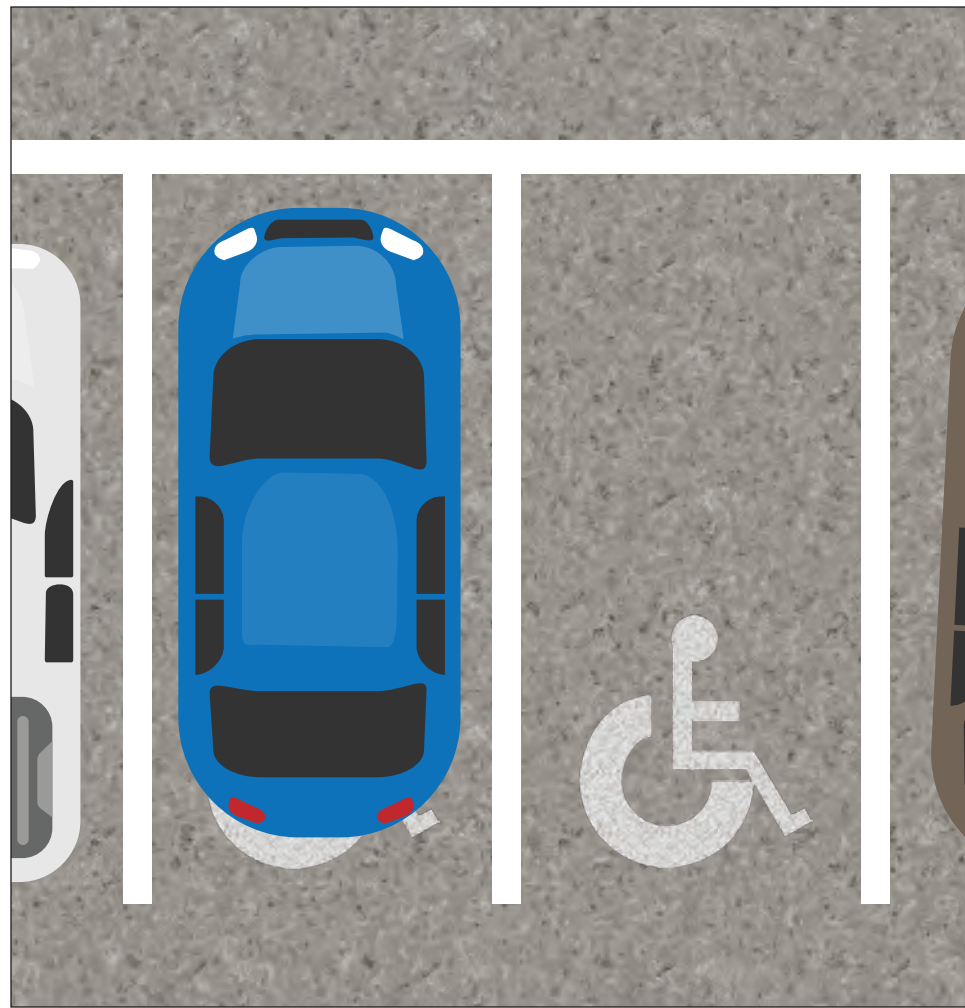
"There have been so many complaints about it and nothing has been done to fix it," Greene said. "I know that I am not the only student who has had to drive around for about 10 minutes to even find a parking spot. For that matter I am not really paying attention to what zone it's in because it's just a parking spot. I jump for joy when I am able to even find a parking spot."

University's profit from parking

In an open records request, Murray State provided *The Murray State News* the revenue from the Parking Office. The request specifically asked for the total revenue the office has made over the last three years from parking passes and parking tickets.

For parking tickets, the Parking Office has made \$864,802.50 from the last three years, according to records. The average is \$288,267 per year.

For parking passes, the Parking Office has made \$3.63 million from the last three years. The average is \$1.21 million per year.



MacKenzie Rogers/The News

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Politics slash TRiO funding

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With the Trump administration continuing its cuts to public education, an important student resource finds itself in danger.

TRiO, a collection of federal programs aimed at assisting students from low-income and disadvantaged backgrounds, has faced funding cuts as the current administration crackdowns on Diversity, Equity and Inclusion policies in education.

Now, Murray State has put an end to the Upward Bound Math and Sciences program amid grant cancellations by the Department of Education. Although the University has appealed the freeze, TRiO officials worry that other programs might also be hit.

“The Department of Education identified that Upward Bound Math and Science application for funding information indicated the participant’s proposed project activities conflict with the Department’s policy of prioritizing merit, fairness and excellence in education,” said Melissa Cooper, director of TRiO and Student Support Services.

The Upward Bound Math and Sciences Program is one of eight TRiO programs and helps students graduating from high school to prepare for postsecondary education in STEM fields. The program operates through the University and is available to high school

students in Western Kentucky and Southern Illinois. It provides tutoring services as well as career coaching, FAFSA assistance and a dozen other student assistance programs.

Cooper said she received a non-continuation letter on Aug. 15 informing her that the program would not receive continued funding due to clashing with administration policies.

Upon hearing the news, Cooper said she felt devastated and concerned for the future of the program’s students. The University appealed the decision, though no resolution has been announced.

TRiO Talent Search Director Audrey Neal said the reason for the non-continuation letter stems from a single line in a support letter included in the programs grant application from the Office of Institutional Diversity, Equity and Access, now the Office of Equal Opportunity.

The letter, which intended to show how the office would assist the program if it received the grant, included a line about providing DEI training to Upward Bound employees.

Neal said this single line was enough to get the grant revoked.

“Out of a 70 page narrative, there’s one sentence that says, provide training to staff on diversity, equity and inclusion,” Neal said. “And that was the statement that they pulled out and said, this is in conflict with the ... department’s current priorities.”



MacKenzie Rogers/The News

While Neal said she understands cutting funding for programs that don’t meet objectives or quotas, she said this administration is only doing it for ideological purposes.

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Patterson talks renovations, learning tour

Zach Simmons

Editor in Chief

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In the two-and-a-half months since Ron Patterson stepped onto campus as president, administrative changes have been implemented, additional dates have been added to the Racer Spirit Listening and Learning Tour and several updates to the campus have occurred.

As school began in August, several buildings experienced leaks. Patterson said the state of the campus facilities didn't surprise him, and he is happy with how the University is handling the updating of older buildings.

"I'm very pleased that we are, as a university, pursuing asset preservation to update those buildings as quickly as we can," Patterson said. "We know that (the older buildings) need a little updating."

Patterson credited Jason Youngblood, the assistant vice president of facilities management, for helping him tour the campus to get a better understanding of the buildings.

Family Weekend happened Sept. 4-6, and while he wasn't able to attend all of the festivities, he thinks families had a great time. This comment was made when talking about the record-setting 15,027 people in attendance for the home opener for the Murray State football team. That number represents the largest attendance at a Family Weekend football game in program history.

"I thought it was an excellent weekend," Patterson said. "When you have record crowds, that means our students are happy that they're here, and they're families came back. That's a testament to our faculty and staff, but more importantly, our students and their families."

Construction and renovations are going on around campus, and Patterson said the School of Nursing and Health Professions facility is "moving at a really good pace" in terms of being finished.

"We've planned and scheduled a topping ceremony for the final beam to be installed," Patterson said. "That'll be an opportunity for our nursing faculty and students to sign the beam. Then we'll have the ceremonial dignitaries and guests sign the beam and finally install it."

Patterson said the ceremony will be on Oct. 30, and once they get everyone moved out of Mason Hall, they can start to renovate and upgrade that space for the new dental hygiene and exercise program.

The University is currently in the process of hiring staff to "lift (the dental hygiene and exercise) program up."

Patterson also discussed his vision for the newest members of the administration, specifically the chief academic officer and chief financial officer. Those positions were held by Tim Todd and Jackie Dudley, respectively. Todd will return to a tenured faculty role in the Arthur J. Baurnefeind College of Business on Nov. 1. Dudley announced her retirement in July, and her last day will be Oct. 31.

"I think it's important as we continue to move forward in the 21st century here at Murray State University that we continue to bring in the best and brightest of individuals and professionals within their responsibility areas," Patterson said. "I am very excited about these two positions and I'm excited about the opportunity for the campus community to help me find the next Chief Academic Officer and CFO."

When discussing the Racer Spirit Listening and Learning Tour, Patterson noted that they've added 10 extra dates. Patterson said they would be in Owensboro, Kentucky; Nashville; and Eddyville, Kentucky, in a 36-hour span.

Additional dates have been added to Patterson's Racer Spirit Listening and Learning Tour. He will host a virtual event from noon to 1 p.m. on Monday, Sept. 22. To RSVP, book online at murraystate.edu/tour/index.aspx to RSVP for a spot.

A drop-in student event will follow from 1:30 to 2:30 p.m. at Waterfield Library that afternoon. Faculty and staff can participate in a session from 8:30-9:30 a.m., Friday, Sept. 26, at the Welcome Center on the first floor of the Curris Center. Coffee and pastries will be provided.

"(This will provide) opportunities for faculty and staff to engage and provide thoughtful and engaging input," Patterson said.

The final drop-in event for the listening tour will be Thursday, Oct. 2, at Winslow Dining Hall. Student Government Association president Ali Khatib will attend. Patterson said he hopes to provide a spot where students can stop, engage and ask questions that they may have.

In light of Charlie Kirk's death during a speech at Utah Valley University, Patterson also brought up campus protocol for campus speakers. He mentioned the university's risk assessment protocol and how they're "not going to recreate the wheel" in terms of changing the policy.

"We already have a great policy, a great practice and great procedures in place," Patterson said. "We're just going to continue to those well. We'll work with the outside guest or security that comes in and be great partners and collaborators in terms of our risk assessment protocols."

Patterson praised Murray State University Chief of Police Ryan Orr and Assistant Chief Christopher Fike for their work in ensuring these protocols are followed correctly.

Patterson also shared his thoughts on the candlelight vigil that was held in front of the Carr Health Building on Sept. 12.

"I'm very proud of our students for taking a very calm, respectful and professional vigil," Patterson said. "They've handled it well and I support them in their efforts. I think it speaks volumes to the students that we have here on our campus."

MONTHLY MEETING WITH PRESIDENT RON PATTERSON



Bust Day 2025

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Murray State's Lambda Chi Alpha fraternity hosted the 52nd Annual Watermelon Bust on Saturday, Sept. 13, in the backyard of the fraternity's annex. For five decades, the fraternity commonly known as, "Chop," has hosted a weeklong fundraiser benefitting Need Line, a local non-profit social service agency. Murray State students are encouraged to donate canned goods and participate in various rebate nights at local restaurants, with the largest portion of the event being a day of competitive mud games in the fraternity's sand volleyball pit. The grand champions of this year's competition are the back-to-back winners, Alpha Omicron Pi.

Photos by Kristopher Fister /The News



Dogs boost students' serotonin

Kennedy Franklin

Contributing Writer

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Murray State is looking for ways to help its students with everyday stressors.

Nearly 41% of college students report feelings of depression, and about 36% live with anxiety disorders, says the Healthy Minds Study, a major survey of college mental health. From noon to 1 p.m. on Monday, Sept. 29, in the Alexander Hall Atrium, Racers Empower: Self-Care September gives students a chance to take a breather, pet therapy dogs and get more information on campus resources all in one quick and easy stop hosted by the Center for Student Engagement and Success.

The event is one of three resource fairs in the fall semester, with three more to come in the spring. Jordan Garner, director for the Center for Student Engagement and Success, begins planning the fairs each June. He said the goal for these events is to remind students they aren't alone.

"I want students to understand they have resources and places to go," Garner said.

Murray State has many resources accessible and open to all students, like the Counseling Center and TimelyCare virtual appointments.

Mental health challenges are increasingly common among college students, with more than 60% reporting anxiety and nearly 45% saying they struggle with depression, according to the American College Health Association. On top of personal issues, students face academic pressure, financial stress and the difficulties of adjusting to being away from family. To help ease those burdens, Murray State has turned to animal-assisted activities, such as therapy dog visits from the Calloway County Humane Society. Research shows that even short interactions with animals can lower stress hormones, improve mood and foster a stronger sense of community and belonging on campus.

The set-up of this event is made with busy college student schedules in mind. Resources and supportive staff will be available to help students with whatever challenges they might be facing. The highlight for many will be the pet therapy dogs.

If you're looking for a quick reset in the middle of a busy day, Racers Empower: Self-Care September is worth checking out. The event runs Monday, Sept. 29, from noon to 1 p.m. and will include campus resources and therapy dogs. Whether you need help, information or a dog to brighten your day, it's a reminder that taking care of yourself matters and there are many different options and resources to help.



MacKenzie Rogers/The News

Mental health awareness and resources improve student lives.

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Racer One program dispels retirement rumors

Annabelle Massa

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After seven years of photo shoots, training students and running the track at Roy Stewart Stadium, rumors have emerged that Vegas Impulse, Murray State's current Racer One horse, is nearing retirement.

Shea Porr, associate dean of the Hutson School of Agriculture and department chair of animal and equine science, said the rumors are unfounded.

"No, we are not talking about retiring Vegas," Porr said. "I'm hoping he'll stick it out and surpass Violet Cactus for the longest running Racer One horse."

Violet Cactus was the first Racer One, serving for eight years. Vegas will tie with Violet next year, and Porr said she hopes he'll run again in 2027 to beat the record. On top of potentially beating that record, Vegas is the first Racer One to be born and bred at Murray State.

"While it doesn't take a lot for a horse to do photo opportunities, it's harder to find one that can handle all the stress at a football game," Porr said. "Vegas does a very good job at both of these things. That being said, we're very aware that we only have one horse that can do the job right now, so we take very good care of Vegas and are keeping our eyes open for a backup."

Outside of football games, Vegas also works with students on the Intercollegiate Horse Show Association Hunt Team, preparing them for competitions where they must lead their horse in jumps over fences. Students are judged based on their riding position and control of their horse.

"He enjoys jumping, but I think he likes running around the track more," Porr said. "He's a smart horse. He knows the difference between working in the arena



Kristopher Fister/The News

Vegas Impulse runs a lap with his last jockey, Madison Presley, during the 2024 Homecoming football game.

with the Hunt Team and being on the track for a football game."

The Racer One Program isn't only about the horse, however. Public relations, event coordination, time management and public speaking are all crucial to Vegas' connection with the community. Since horses aren't the best at public communications, those responsibilities fall to the jockey.

Breece Mohon, the current Racer One jockey, is a junior marketing major from Mayfield, Kentucky. She's also on the IHSA Hunt Team and a member of Alpha Omicron Pi.

"I definitely have a full plate, but I feel like I'm able to manage it well," Mohon said. "A lot of people think

that all you do is run around the track, and that's definitely not the case."

Mohon said Racer One events can be anywhere around campus and be anything from photoshoots to recruitment events. She said she's hoping to visit elementary schools and nursing homes during her time as a jockey.

"It does take a lot of my time, but it's something that I love," Mohon said. "I love being out in the community and meeting so many people."

Racer One's presence in the community is a campus tradition that's been upheld for almost 50 years.

"This is a special tradition, and one I hope we never lose," Porr said.

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Murder should not be on our social media timeline

Laney Evans
Sports Editor
levans11@murraystate.edu

Have you ever involuntarily watched someone get murdered on your social media feed?

How often do graphic images with victims of violence appear on the personal device you are required to spend time on due to various employment, civic and social obligations, despite lack of previous engagement or direct search of such displays?

This is the first time in documented history that people are not just able, but expected to spend hours a day working and communicating on devices that can live stream and replay human death and physical suffering with the tap of a finger. For nearly two years, the Palestinian genocide in Gaza has been live-streamed by civilians on social media and broadcast on almost every news platform. With the rise of remote workers since the COVID-19 pandemic and the subsequent rise in worker access to the internet, individuals are spending an increasing amount of time online attempting to complete daily tasks while surrounded by depictions of war, violence and death.

Charlie Kirk, co-founder of Turning Point USA, was publicly murdered on Wednesday, Sept. 10, while speaking at a political event at Utah Valley University. Despite the efforts of several mainstream news organizations to maintain precedent by refraining from showing explicit images and videos of graphic violence, within two hours of the incident, over 11 million people had seen the video of his public death.

President Donald Trump confirmed his death on Truth Social, the social media platform owned by Trump, within minutes of the incident, and the uncensored video disseminated at record rates around apps such as X, formerly known as Twitter, Threads, YouTube and Telegram, which is a social media and messaging service used around the world in various capacities, most notably for organized crime. This public declaration of violence occurred only a few days after the release of a surveillance video online of a Ukrainian refugee getting fatally stabbed by a man on a North Carolina commuter train, and almost two years worth of photos and videos of dead and injured children and adults suffering from the mass extermination and famine in Gaza.

Images of real dead bodies are at the fingertips of almost every American. Although media companies deny fault, the \$1.37 trillion price tag on the tech billionaires who were present at President Trump's 2025 inauguration and released documents suggest the elites within the federal government may have more control over the media we consume than the average American considers.

The first time the American public was exposed to immediate video of the public assassination of a public figure was in the 1963 assassination of then-President John F. Kennedy. For four days, the public was glued to the silver screen, and 93% of all homes with television sets, or an estimated few million people were tuned in to one of the three networks – CBS, NBC and ABC – to view his funeral procession.

The next event that came close to those levels of viewership is 9/11, when an estimated two billion people either viewed the media coverage of the plane crashes in real time or watched the news coverage that day. Many Americans still know exactly where they were when they heard the news, and the emotions they felt that day have shaped their current political perspective and beliefs in some way or another.

During both of these national tragedies, Americans were provided with media coverage that exposed them to the gruesome reality of public violence, and politicians and news media used politically motivated messaging to take advantage of those emotions and influence public opinion.

Amidst the COVID-19 pandemic, millions of dead Americans were diminished to numbers in online statistics and in the governor's daily death count. It became difficult for Americans to mourn every loss of life because of the sheer magnitude of that loss.

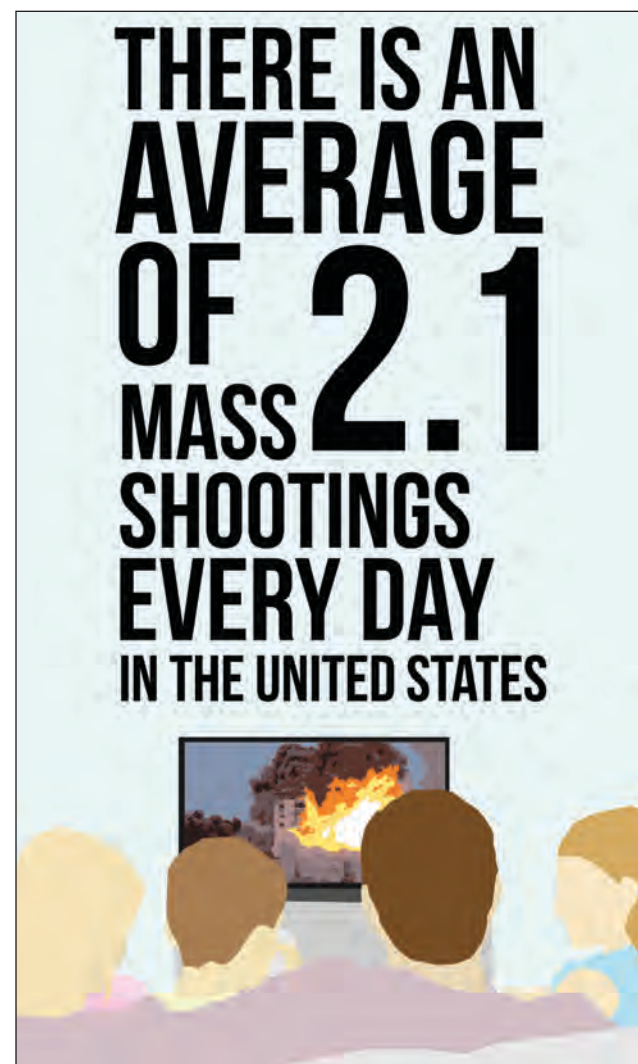
For the last two years, millions of images have been shared via social media by the remaining official journalists in Gaza, while civilian journalists have livestreamed bombings, electricity blackouts, and the striking reality of modern mass murder. You would think the impact of social media exposure must be apparent to the Israeli government, as 249 journalists have been murdered while attempting to document the genocide.

It is easy to assume that the public is only exposed to such violent acts through the small screen, as one in three Americans has viewed gun violence on their personal social media, according to NPR. However, nearly one in five Americans report personally witnessing someone being shot – and almost every person in America will know at least one victim of gun violence during their lifetime, according to Gifford's Gun Violence Statistics.

There were 3,106 mass shootings in America from 2021-2024, with mass shootings being defined as incidents where four or more people are shot and killed, not including the shooter. That averages out to 2.1 mass shootings per day within the borders of the United States after a quick drop in shootings during the COVID-19 pandemic in 2020. A large portion of these shootings are on video in some capacity, whether it be from security camera footage or someone's personal device. However, it is custom for newspapers and television networks to "gatekeep" explicit content in order to protect their readers and viewers, and therefore videos from these tragedies often do not end up being viewed by the American public.

Although we are not currently living in an active battle zone with a visible enemy, Americans are increasingly more vulnerable to violent attacks at rates that far exceed our counterparts in the developed world. Perhaps the lack of a clear enemy and the urgency to find a perpetrator causes people to be easily persuaded by messaging from political parties that place quick blame on already marginalized groups of people for structural phenomena in American society.

Aristotle describes government as the means to achieve the good life, or a place of personal and systematic peace within society. As Americans, we must ask ourselves if our



MacKenzie Rogers/The News

government is working diligently to ensure our citizens achieve this so-called, "good life."

I challenge you to think critically about the images you are exposed to through social media and try to view it from the perspective of the creators and distributors. Why would one's own government stand complacent in the majority of its population having daily, detailed exposure to Earth's most heinous, violent crimes? More importantly, what actions are government officials taking in response to these visual displays of violence and how do those actions reflect the intentions of the federal government and its subsequent international influences?

In a world of inevitable entropy and complexity, it is the duty of the individual to use their discernment in order to attempt to see the world through the lense of truth.

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Calendar of events

Thursday, Sept. 18

- Sid Easley Lecture
7-8:30 p.m., Wrather Museum Auditorium
- Cinema International: "Sun and Daughter"
7:30-10 p.m., Faculty Hall, Room 208

Tuesday, Sept. 23

- Aesop's Fable
9:30 a.m.- 12:30 p.m., Robert E Johnson Theatre
- WIC: Self Defense Seminar
5-6:30 p.m., Carr Health 206

Thursday, Sept. 25

- C. Todd Birdsong Artist Talk
Noon-1 p.m., Wrather Hall Auditorium
- Dr. Stephanie Rea "Creativity as a Life Skill in the Age of AI"
4-5:30 p.m., Faculty Hall 208
- Leadership by Design with former Special Agent Evy Poumpouras
5:30-6:30 p.m., Lovett Auditorium

Saturday, Sept. 27

- Festival of Champions
Roy Stewart Stadium

Tuesday, Sept. 30

- All Majors & Graduate School Career Fair
2-5 p.m., CFSB Center

Wednesday, Oct. 1

- STEM & OSH Career Fair
2-5 p.m., CFSB Center

Thursday, Oct. 2

- Wind Ensemble and Symphonic Band Concert
7:30-9 p.m., Lovett Auditorium
- Cinema International: "Parallel Mothers"
7:30-10 p.m., Faculty Hall 208

Hey there!

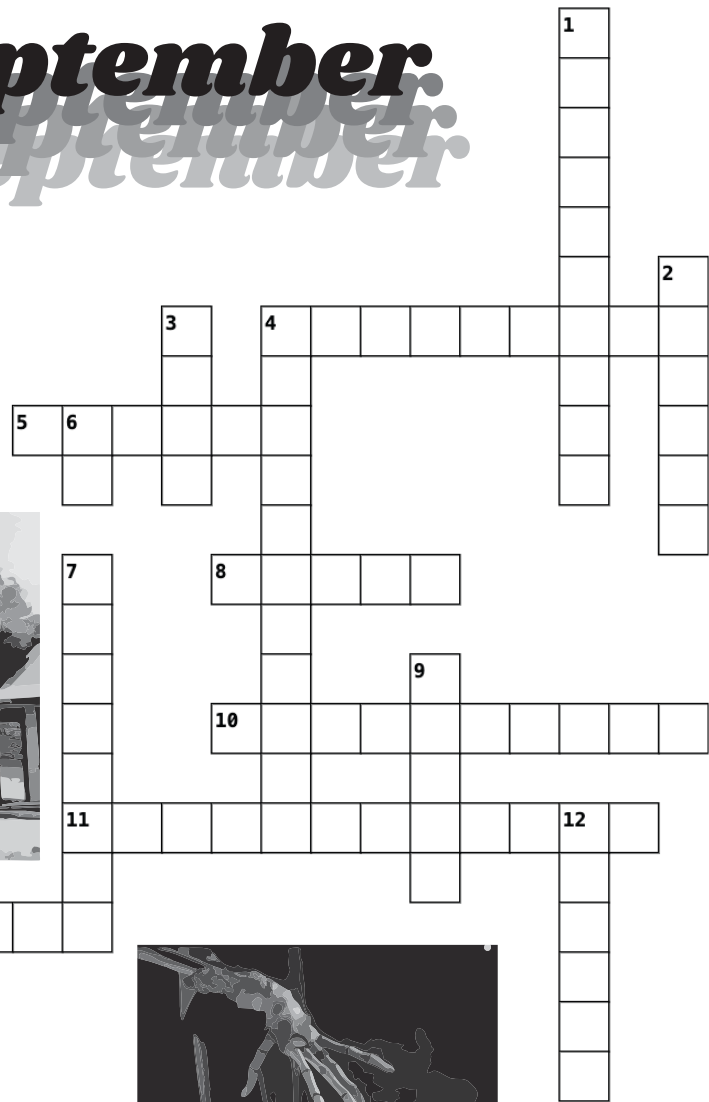
Are you hosting an event on-campus? Let us know! If you are having an event on or after Oct. 2, send us a email with details to get YOUR events on the calendar!

Email us at:

msu.thenews@murraystate.edu

Movies released in September

Crossword



Across

- IT LOOKS A BIT CLOUDY
- ATTITUDE REFLECTS LEADERSHIP, CAPTAIN.
- CAN A HEART STILL BREAK ONCE IT'S STOPPED BEATING?
- VAMPIRES VS. LYCANS
- A HOTEL FILLED WITH MONSTERS
- BLAKE LIVELY AND ANNA KENDRICK AS BEST FRIENDS

Down

- A VERY MERRY UNBIRTHDAY TO YOU!
- A BOY'S BEST FRIEND IS HIS MOTHER
- MY EX-WIFE HAD MY KID AND DIDN'T TELL ME
- LET'S ROB A BANK VAULT
- FLOATING IN THE SEWER WITH BRIGHT RED BALLOONS
- GOING TO COLLEGE WITH A GROUP OF SECRET SERVICE AGENTS
- HOLLYWOOD STUTMAN, WHO SERVES AS A GETAWAY
- OLDER MAN GETS A POSITION WITH AN ONLINE FASHION SITE



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SCORES AT A GLANCE

Soccer

AUG. 28 @ XAVIER: L 8-0
 AUG. 31 VS MARSHALL: W 3-2
 SEPT. 4 @ UT MARTIN: W 2-1
 SEPT. 7 @ AUSTIN PEAY: T 0-0
 SEPT. 11 VS SEMO: W 4-0

Football

AUG. 30 @ EAST TENNESSEE STATE: L 45-17
 SEPT. 6 VS SOUTHEASTERN LOUISIANA: L 45-24
 SEPT. 13 @ GEORGIA STATE: L 37-21

Volleyball

AUG. 29 VS AUSTIN PEAY: W 3-1
 AUG. 29 VS TN TECH: L 3-0
 AUG. 30 VS XAVIER: L 3-1
 SEPT. 5 VS WESTERN ILLINOIS: W 3-2
 SEPT. 5 VS SAINT LOUIS: L 3-0
 SEPT. 6 VS AUSTIN PEAY: L 3-2
 SEPT. 12 VS WEBER STATE: L 3-0
 SEPT. 12 VS IOWA: L 3-0
 SEPT. 13 VS SEMO: L 3-0

Men's Golf

SEPT. 8-9 @ MARSHALL INVITATIONAL
 2ND OF 15
 SEPT. 15-16 @ GROVER PAGE CLASSIC
 4TH OF 14

Women's Golf

SEPT. 8-9 @ TOTAL ATHLETE COLLEGIATE
 4TH OF 9
 SEPT. 15-16 @ THE VELVET CLASSIC
 4TH OF 14

Cross Country

MEN @ SEMO
 5TH OF 8
 WOMEN @ SEMO
 2ND OF 10

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
				18	19	20
21	22	23	24	25	26	27
28	29	30				

September

Football
 Sept. 20 @ Jax State 6 p.m.
 Oct. 4 @ South Dakota 2 p.m.

Women's Golf
 Sept. 22-23 @ Mizzou

Tennis

Sept. 19-21 @ APSU Invitational
 Sept. 26-28 @ Redbird Invitational
 Oct. 3-5 @ Lipscomb Invitational

SPORTS CALENDAR



Cross Country

Sept. 19 @ SIU
 Oct. 4 @ Louisville

Volleyball

Sept. 25 @ Belmont 6 p.m.
 Sept. 26 vs SIU 6 p.m.
 Oct. 3 @ Drake 6 p.m.
 Oct. 4 @ UNI 1 p.m.

Soccer

Sept. 18 @ Illinois St. 6 p.m.
 Sept. 25 vs UNI 3 p.m.
 Sept. 28 vs Drake 1 p.m.

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
			1	2	3	4
5						

October

Murray State's tennis courts get long overdue makeover

Parker Lally
 Contributing Writer
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The Murray State Racers women's tennis team has been very successful in recent years, being back-to-back MVC conference champions in 2024 and 2025, so it was time for an upgrade on their home courts. The tennis courts located on Murray State's campus are named after the famous American basketball player, Bennie Purcell.

Not only was Purcell an athlete, but he also became Murray State's men's tennis coach, holding that position for 28 years. In his 28 years with the team, his teams won 11 Ohio Valley Conference men's tennis championships, along with being named OVC's Men's Tennis Coach of the Year eight times.

Previous to this year, the Bennie Purcell tennis courts had not been resurfaced since 2005. How long between resurfacing tennis courts really depends on the maintenance and upkeep of the specific set of courts, but time between resurfacings should not exceed 20 years, so the courts at Murray State were pushed to their limit. This revamping of the courts was funded by private support, as well as funding from the United States Tennis Association (the USTA) and USTA Kentucky.

The Racer tennis program celebrated the grand re-opening on Friday, Aug. 22, holding an event welcoming the community to come play with the women's tennis team.

The current head coach of the women's team is Jorge Caetano, who is starting his 11th season at MSU. Caetano played for Murray State, and as a senior in 2012, he played in the top singles spot under coach Mel Purcell. Mel Purcell is Bennie Purcell's son, a retired professional tennis player who now spends his time coaching clinics and playing tennis in Murray. Mel Purcell coached men's tennis at Murray State for 20 years, but there has not been a men's tennis team at MSU since 2016, due to Title IX.

Mel has had a decorated career to say the least. His highest singles career ranking was No. 21 in the world, achieved in November 1980. Mel also went to the quarter finals of Wimbledon in 1983. Aside from his own personal accomplishments playing the sport, as the Murray State head coach he led the team to back-to-back Ohio Valley Conference titles.

With the courts being named after his father and his extensive past with Murray State tennis, it was only fitting that the first ball on the newly resurfaced courts was hit by Mel on the day of the event.

The top singles player for Murray State is junior Valeriia Chaikovskaia, who will be starting her third season with Racers tennis this year. Chaikovskaia is from Russia, and she has been very successful with the Racers tennis program. She spoke a little about what it has been like since the courts have been resurfaced.

"It's been nice since we got our courts redone," Chaikovskaia said. "I would say we feel more motivated to play on these new courts."

Chaikovskaia won the award for singles performance of the year for her freshman year at Murray State, and in her first two seasons with the Racers, they were back-to-back Missouri Valley Conference Champions. Chaikovskaia spoke a little about what she is looking forward to next with Racers tennis.

"For now I'm just super excited to start playing fall tournaments, don't want to look far ahead," Chaikovskaia said. "But obviously I can't wait for the spring season, can't wait to feel this energy again and compete."

It is safe to say that with these newly resurfaced courts and the amazing team Caetano has built, everyone is looking forward to this upcoming tennis season. The women's team will start their 2025/2026 season with a fall tournament on Friday, Sept. 19, at the APSU Invitational in Clarksville, Tennessee.

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2026 Racers Athletics Hall of Fame class revealed

Laney Evans

Sports Editor

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The 43rd class to the Murray State University Hall of Fame includes Ohio Valley Conference (OVC) champions, hometown heroes and many school records holders whose decades-old records still stand today. These eight Racers greats will be officially inducted in early 2026.

Having been coached under football stadium namesake Johnny Reagan from 1978-91, Danny Alfeldt is the oldest member of the 2025 class. He finished as Murray State's career leader in at-bats, hits and doubles. During his tenure, he helped win the 1991 OVC regular season championship.

Three-time All-OVC pick and two-time CoSida Academic All-American winner Alexa Baker became the first in school history in runs scored (153), third in RBI (132) and seventh in hits (198). She started as a freshman in 2011 and still remains at the top of the program statistics.

Murray native Casey Brockman (2009-12) joins teammate Marcus Harris as the third quarterback/wide receiver duo to be inducted into the Hall of Fame following Larry Tillman, inducted in 1978, and Harvey Tanner, inducted in 1992, and Mike Cherry and Reggie Swinton, who were inducted in 2022. Brockman broke numerous passing records during his tenure and was a back-to-back All-American in 2011 and 2012, Walter Payton Award finalist and one of six three-time All-OVC selections in Racer football history.



Logo courtesy of Murray State Athletics

Wide receiver counterpart to Brockman, Marcus Harris, finished his collegiate career in 2010 as the program's all-time leader in receptions (216), yards (2,471) and touchdowns (22). His professional career included five National Football League seasons, one with the Lions (2011), one with the Titans (2012) and the remaining three with Giants (2013-15). He also spent time with both the United Football League and the Arena Football League.

Rachel Guistino began her time as a Racer with Hall of Famer Scottie Ingram in 2016. By 2019, Guistino

had surpassed Ingram's top records and played on two OVC championship teams for coach Dave Schwepker. Within 2017-2019, she was named a three-time OVC pick, 2019 OVC Player of the Year and the 2019 American Volleyball Coaches Association award recipient.

In 2012, Tonia Pratt won the OVC indoor weight throw and outdoor happier throw, as well as OVC Freshman of the Year. By the end of her career, she held seven OVC championships and still holds Murray State's shot put, discus and hammer throw records. She began her career in the fall of 2011 with then head coach Jenny Severns and finished in 2015 with current head coach Adam Kiesler.

Seven-time All-American and Paris Olympic games rifle competitor Ivan Roe certainly earned his spot as a Murray State hall of famer, as he maintained an advantage over his fellow nationally-ranked teammates for four seasons in both smallbore and air rifle.

Men's basketball all-time shot blocker Cuthbert Victor became a Racer in 2000 under fellow MSU hall of famer, coach Tevester Anderson, after growing up in St. Croix, Virgin Islands. Victor became an All-American and OVC Player of the Year as a senior in 2004 under coach Mick Cronin, and he remains at number nine all-time in Murray State field goal percentages and top-20 in points and career goals made. He traveled for 13 years playing professionally in Spain, Russia, France, South Korea and Puerto Rico.

This is the 43rd Hall of Fame class since its founding in 1965 under football coach Roy Stewart, who was inducted in 1971. The total number of inductees is now 196. The date of this class' induction will be announced at a later date.

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The return of Kate the Great

Young joins coaching staff after a successful summer stint in Australia

Laney Evans

Sports Editor

levans11@murraystate.edu

In less than six months, Katelyn Young became the 14th highest scorer in Division I basketball history, a Missouri Valley Conference champion with the Racers women's basketball team and a Women's National Basketball League National champion with the Knox Raiders in Australia. On Sept. 8, Racer Athletics announced the well-kept secret that Young will be adding assistant coach at her alma mater to her list of accomplishments in 2025.

Both Young and head coach Rechelle Turner attribute the trust that was built between the two of them over the last seven years and the overall culture within the coaching staff to being what ultimately brought her back to the Racers after three months of success in an overseas professional league.

Turner recruited Young for two years before she made her Murray State debut, taking frequent trips to Oakwood, Illinois, to watch her compete in various high school sports. Young became a four-time Illinois Basketball Coaches Association All-State selection and a Four-time AP Class 2A All-State selection while playing four years of volleyball, two years of track and field and one year of softball. Further proving her well-roundedness, she won All-County awards at least once in all three sports.

"I watched volleyball, I watched basketball ... Anything that she wanted me to be at, I was there," Turner said.

Young ended her dominant high school career totaling 2,361 points and averaging 22.7 points and 10.9 rebounds per game as a senior.

During Young's first year as a Racer, she led the Ohio Valley Conference in rebounding with 251 for the season and an average of 9.3 per game. She began her five year streak of being named to the all-conference team and the following year she made the most consecutive field goals in a single game in school history by going 10-for-10 in Evansville.

During her collegiate career, she scored the third most points in a single game in Murray State history at Drake with 43 points, was an eight-time OVC Player of the Week in one season and became the first AP All-American in school history.

"She wasn't Kate the Great her freshman year – she developed into that," Turner said.

As her awards continued to stack up, she continued to build her legacy with Racer basketball. On senior night, her jersey was retired to commemorate her contributions to the program as a player.

After Name, Image and Likeness deals got approved for the NCAA, Young had opportunities to monetize her college experience. Instead of entering the transfer portal in search of greener grass, she chose to keep watering her own in Murray. Under the wing of coach Turner, Young said she has grown as both an athlete and a person.

Leading the Racers to the Missouri Valley Championship and ultimately giving the team a change to dance was always Young's goal. After four years of development, growing pains and intentional recruitment, the circumstances were finally just right for the conference championship and a trip to Norman, Oklahoma.

Coach Turner revealed that Young was the first person she thought of when the assistant coach position opened.



Kristopher Fister/The News

Head Coach Rechelle Turner and Katelyn Young embrace after Turner's record-setting 121st win at Murray State.

"The more time we spent together, the relationship just grew and grew and it just became a really important part of her success, in my opinion, because she knew how much I trusted her. She trusted me, and we just kind of had that connection," Turner said. "When the job came open, I mean, it was a no brainer for me to ask her. I had no idea that she would say yes, matter of fact, I said, 'I know you're not gonna do this, but I've still got to ask.'"

There were many factors that led Young to her decision to return to the Racers, the largest being the community and relationships that she built as a student-athlete.

Although her professional career was short-lived, Young expressed no regret in her decisions, describing the experience as an awesome opportunity. As a Knox Raider, she played in 13 games and averaged 14 minutes per game. In her final game in the national championship, she scored 10 points and grabbed six rebounds.

"One of our coaches mentioned that people go abroad and chase championships their entire lives and I got it in three months. It was a great note to go out on, and I'm glad it happened the way it did," Young said.

After three months of professional basketball and exploring the beauty of Australia on her own and with family, she finalized her decision to take the job offer from coach Turner and expand her Racer legacy. Only time will tell the extent to which her knowledge and experience will aid the Racers as they look to rebuild and level up for the 2025-16 season.



Kristopher Fister/The News

Rechelle Turner points to the rafters as Young's jersey gets retired

On Nov. 3, Young will join the Murray State women's basketball team, coach Turner and the remaining coaching staff for their non-conference home opener against Trevecca at 7 p.m. in the CFSB Center.

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