St. Louis County prosecutor to speak at Columbia law school

COLUMBIA, Mo. (AP) — The St. Louis County prosecutor is set to speak next week at a Columbia law school about the grand jury process and the fatal shooting of an unarmed 18-year-old by a Ferguson police officer.

The Columbia Daily Tribune reports Bob McCulloch is scheduled to speak next Tuesday at the University of Missouri School of Law. The student chapter of the Missouri Association of Prosecuting Attorneys organized his appearance.

A founder of the group's student chapter says the event is a way to continue discussions about the events in Ferguson and race.

The August death of Michael Brown, who was black, prompted months of protests in the region. A grand jury declined to indict now-former officer Darren Wilson, who is white, in the shooting.

University of Missouri-Columbia chief retiring

COLUMBIA, Mo. (AP) — The police chief of the University of Missouri in Columbia is retiring after more than four decades with the department.

The Columbia Daily Tribune (http://bit.ly/1CPnuwg) reports that 69-year-old Jack Watring's last official day on the job will be June 1. But he'll be leaving April 1, using leftover vacation for the next few months.

Watring, who has been chief since 2003, came to the department 44 years ago after two years with the Missouri State Highway Patrol.
Watring says he and his wife have a second home at the Lake of the Ozarks that he plans to visit more often in retirement. And he plans to do more bass fishing with the Ozark Mountain Anglers club.

Maj. Doug Schwandt was appointed interim chief as of March 1.

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March 25, 2015

States Are Eager to Collect Graduates’ Job Data. Here’s Where That Effort Stands.

By Lance Lambert

NO MU MENTION

For decades some state lawmakers have pushed public colleges and universities to think of themselves as parts of a broader job-training plan. It’s only recently that those efforts have been bolstered by detailed data.

Working with years of income information, a majority of states (at least 37, according to survey results released in October) have now built — or are in the process of building — systems that can pinpoint what graduates earn. Some states can even tell what types of jobs the graduates hold and how much debt they’ve taken on. Ohio’s system, for example, knows that the typical biology graduate of Ohio State University earns $22,565 in his or her first year after graduation.

That’s valuable information, and some states are moving to make use of it. For example, Florida already factors work-force data into decisions on funding for public colleges and universities. It’s not hard to find lawmakers eager to use the information to push students away from "underperforming" degrees and toward programs that lay a pipeline to "in-demand" jobs.

Meanwhile, states continue to spend money to build such data-collection programs. In addition, President Obama’s budget for 2016 would allocate $107 million to the two
federal grant programs supporting so-called longitudinal data systems, up 174 percent from the current fiscal year.

The growth of income analysis, says Anthony P. Carnevale, director of Georgetown University’s Center on Education and the Workforce, is "more a relentless brush fire than a spectacular forest fire. The information will arrive a long time before the policy impacts will be known."

But as work-force data becomes more commonplace — and starts to influence policy decisions — it’s worth pausing to take a look at some of its shortcomings. Even many of the people building the data systems admit the limitations are significant, at least for the time being. Those limits may affect the data’s short-term use and its long-term value.

**Flaws and Holes**

Here’s how states typically generate work-force data: Most use graduates’ Social Security numbers to match quarterly income information reported by employers with colleges’ transcript data. The states then aggregate the data to show the average earnings among graduates of specific degree programs.

That sounds simple enough. But according to Eugene J. Kovacs, assistant vice chancellor of information-resource management for the State University System of Florida, the data still has missing pieces. Most important, graduates who work in another state are missing from the records of the state where they received their degree.

Those missing graduates can make up a huge chunk of a state’s awarded diplomas. For instance, only 26 percent of the graduates of Colorado’s public colleges and universities have been found in its wage records.

Also not captured in the data are graduates who take jobs with the federal government or who are missing for other reasons. "We don’t know how many we’re looking for," says Rachel Zinn, director of the Workforce Data Quality Campaign, "because the ‘missing’ students might be employed out of state, or they might be unemployed, or pursuing further education, so they are not working, or maybe they are self-employed and so not in unemployment-insurance wage records at all." Ms. Zinn’s group is an effort to expand the skilled work force.

The missing data is a problem because it might be undervaluing — or overvaluing — some degree programs. For example, Ohio State’s biology program, whose graduates
post low earnings in their first year out of college, might have skewed income results: Only 36 percent of its graduates have been found working in the Buckeye State.

Those gaps could be filled in. Mark S. Schneider, president of College Measures, a research partnership that investigates higher-education outcomes, suggests one solution: for the Internal Revenue Service to hand over missing wage data to states.

Meantime, though, some states are teaming up to share data on workers. More than 36 states participate in one such program, the Wage Record Interchange System 2. Some states are benefiting from the exchange. Florida now has data on about 70 percent of its public-college graduates, with a small share of that coming from the interchange system.

But as Mr. Schneider points out, the interchange comes with its own problems. Two of the largest states, California and New York, do not participate. And about one in four requests for data go unanswered.

With so many holes in the data, is it fair to base funding on such a system? Mr. Schneider argues that the missing data on graduates who work out of state shouldn’t confound policy decisions because most states are chiefly concerned with educational and economic outcomes within their borders.

But several state officials working on data systems note that, with very few graduates coming from some degree programs, sample size is a concern. In smaller fields, it may be hard to confidently make funding decisions with incomplete earnings data.

Of course, even sound data is open to interpretation. It’s not entirely clear, for example, which years of income data should become the basis for funding choices. As Mr. Schneider points out, graduates in some majors historically have earned more after their early years. For instance, Ohio State’s biology majors — the ones who earn just over $22,500 in their first year out of college — make $57,566 by their sixth. That makes the major look much more valuable.

Other experts ask broader questions about using the data as a driver of policy decisions.

"Students and states would be well advised to be thoughtful and know what the data means," says Tod R. Massa, policy-research and data-warehousing director at the State Council of Higher Education for Virginia.
"I have a degree in studio art," he says. "For some people, that major will not be relevant."

**States Fill the Void**

That was part of the argument higher-education lobbyists made in the run-up to the 2008 reauthorization of the Higher Education Act. That law bans federal agencies from collecting graduates’ income data, precisely to prevent the government from using the figures to influence appropriations and policy. By that point, states had already begun to pick up the slack. Although the income information had been available for decades, it was not until the 1990s, when Florida started to build its system, that the data was seen as a way to measure educational outcome.

Jay Pfeiffer, the architect of Florida’s system, says it created a pathway for other states. In 2005 the U.S. Department of Education started issuing grants to states interested in building their own longitudinal data systems.

While the federal government is barred from creating a national system, it continues to fund state projects. A big boost came from the 2009 economic-stimulus legislation, which pumped $250 million into states’ income-tracking programs. There’s a chance, albeit a slim one, that the federal government could get into the game directly. Sen. Ron Wyden, Democrat of Oregon, plans to reintroduce the "Student Right to Know Before You Go Act" — a bill, last floated in 2013, that would create a dashboard allowing students to search earnings and student-debt data by degree program. The bill would roll back some of the national restrictions enacted in 2008.

But for the bill to pass, Mr. Wyden would need to assuage concerns about the database’s privacy and security, and about how the data would be used by the government. A Senate Democratic aide says she is "not too optimistic" about the bill’s prospects, especially in the face of fears of data breaches and concerns that the data could be tied to financial-aid funding. The aide notes that the bill has supporters and skeptics on both sides of the aisle, and that Republican control of Congress does not necessarily damage or raise the bill’s prospects.

So states have taken up the mantle themselves. Fourteen have ponied up money, and 19 others are in the process of allocating funds for their own data systems. Minnesota’s Legislature recently appropriated about $1.8 million to acquire additional data and maintain its current system.

Despite holes in the data and concerns about its value, the systems aren’t going away. And if funding is any indicator, more states will jump on board soon.
"Everybody," says Mr. Carnevale, "is heading down this road, almost without exception."

The Athletic Machine Is in Charge of the University'

Mary C. Willingham, Former Learning Specialist at Chapel Hill

NO MENTION


Mary C. Willingham, a learning specialist who blew the whistle on academic fraud at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, is promoting a book she co-wrote about the scandal. In a recent conversation with The Chronicle, Ms. Willingham talked about how the scandal highlighted what she said are larger problems in the world of big-time college sports, warning that “the athletic machine is in charge of the university." Ms. Willingham also discussed her efforts to expose the fraud at Chapel Hill, how colleges could do more to help athletes get a meaningful education, and her advice for others who see problems similar to the ones that arose at UNC.

U.S. Keeps Scrutiny of Risky Colleges Secret

March 26, 2015
NO MENTION

WASHINGTON -- The U.S. Department of Education is so concerned about the risk that dozens of colleges pose to students and taxpayers that it has curtailed access to federal money at those institutions -- but it won’t say which ones.

Even as it pushes to make far more information about colleges available to consumers, the department is keeping hidden from public view its decisions to punish certain colleges with funding restrictions known as heightened cash monitoring.

At the end of last October, 76 colleges or universities were subject to the most stringent form of those restrictions, according to the department. Another 455 institutions, as of last August, faced a lower level of scrutiny.

But the department has refused to provide the names of those colleges because of the “competitive injury” it may cause them.

“Given the highly competitive environment in which these institutions conduct business, any public release of the confidential financial standing of these institutions will likely cause the institutions substantial competitive injury,” a department official, who declined to be named, wrote in an email to Inside Higher Ed on Tuesday.

Such reasoning hasn’t stopped the department from publishing other information about colleges that might harm their reputation in the interest of protecting students. It annually publishes colleges’ financial responsibility scores and an array of other financial and price data. And last year the Obama administration began releasing the names of colleges under investigation for mishandling sexual assault cases.

Denise Horn, a department spokeswoman, said in a statement late Wednesday night that the department was considering releasing the heightened cash monitoring information, after months of requests from Inside Higher Ed.

“Education Department attorneys are reviewing the request for the list of institutions under heightened cash monitoring, and we hope to make a decision on its release soon,” she said. “The department is committed to being transparent with data so that institutions are accountable to both students and taxpayers.”

The financial sanctions, which have been in the department’s arsenal since the mid-1990s, have attracted the most attention in recent years when they have been associated with the downfall of large for-profit colleges. Take, for example, the collapse last year of Corinthian Colleges, or the sudden bankruptcy of Computer Learning Centers in 2001.

But there is far less information available about the relatively smaller, nonprofit and for-profit colleges and universities that the department has placed on heightened cash monitoring in the name of protecting the roughly $150 billion of taxpayer money that flows to institutions each year. That department officials have concerns about those
institutions’ handling of federal money may foreshadow other problems that impact students or other stakeholders.

Some members of Congress have gone to bat for colleges in their district that are facing heightened cash monitoring. And some colleges -- and the lawyers who represent them -- argue that the sanction is a heavy-handed tool that the department often wields arbitrarily or with little regard for the serious financial problems it can impose on institutions that rely on federal aid for revenue.

**A Lack of Transparency**

Colleges that are in good standing with the Education Department, which includes the vast majority of them, typically access federal funds through the bureaucratic equivalent of an honor system: they draw down from a federal account the money needed to pay out federal loans and grants to their students.

All colleges are subject to retrospective audits of how they administer those grants and loans. And all colleges are held to a high legal standard of responsibility for properly handling the money.

Some institutions trigger restrictions on their access to federal aid by falling below a certain threshold -- like failing the department’s financial health test, for instance. In other cases, though, department regulators at various branch offices across the country may decide they need to more closely scrutinize the federal aid flowing to a college.

The Education Department has, according to its own rules, the “sole discretion” to decide how easy or difficult it should be for a college to get access to federal student aid money.

How the department exercises that power, though, has been largely shrouded in secrecy.

The department last summer denied a request by Inside Higher Ed for the names of colleges that have been sanctioned, saying that it “does not retain a list of schools on HCM1 and HCM2,” using the abbreviation for heightened cash monitoring, levels 1 and 2. (Inside Higher Ed’s appeal of that decision has been pending since November.) However, a department official said in an email this week that it “is not accurate to state that the Department does not have a listing of all institutions currently subjected to heightened cash monitoring 1 and 2.”

Department staff previously provided a list to Congressional investigators that showed which colleges were sanctioned between 2008 and 2012, according to Melissa Emrey-Arras, who oversees education issues at the Government Accountability Office. The G.A.O. used heightened cash monitoring as an indicator of a college’s financial health for a study that examined whether sanctions imposed by accreditors correlated with actual problems at a college.

**Use on Campuses**

In the absence of much official information from the department about which colleges are subject to heightened cash monitoring, the penalty is discussed and communicated
very differently across different campuses.

Martin University, for instance, put out a news release last year touting that it was “awarded the highest rating by the U.S. Department of Education” for handling student aid funds, which it described as “an important recognition of Martin’s fiscal integrity and ability to meet the financial needs of our students.”

The private nonprofit university in Indiana had been removed from heightened cash monitoring and is now able to access federal funds in the same manner as the vast majority of institutions.

At Mid-Continent University, students were kept in the dark about the department’s decision to tighten the university’s access to federal funds over concerns that Mid-Continent wasn’t following federal student aid rules. The university was unable to properly document any of the federal loans and grants it made to students under the scrutiny of heightened cash monitoring, and it closed 10 months later. Now in bankruptcy, the university is trying to recover that money from students.

The department in January placed St. Catharine College, a private liberal arts institution in Kentucky, on heightened cash monitoring, citing “severe findings” of a department audit of the college’s financial aid program. (Inside Higher Ed obtained that information through an open records request to the Kentucky state agency that oversees higher education.)

Officials at the college said they’re not sure what those findings entail, but they’re not concerned about the college’s financial situation.

“We are fine,” said Jeremy Pittman, the college’s vice president for financial aid and enrollment management. “We don’t have concerns over cash flow issues.”

Asked whether the college had told students about the sanction, the college’s provost, Cindy Gnadinger, said that “it’s been communicated to campus.”

She said that the administration held a meeting to inform faculty and staff about the sanction. The college has also hired additional staff and changed some of its financial aid policies.

“What [students are] aware of is that we’ve had changes in our procedures and policies in how we’re distributing aid,” she said.

Political Involvement

In some cases, members of Congress have involved themselves in how the department imposes heightened cash monitoring.

After the department imposed the sanction on Bramson ORT College, a nonprofit two-year technical college in New York City, the college was unable to access the aid through the heightened cash monitoring reimbursement process.

It was so cash-strapped that it was “weeks away from closing,” according to the office of Representative Grace Meng, a Democrat who represents the district in Queens where
the college is located.

Meng called a meeting with department officials and was able to get the department to release some of the federal aid under heightened cash monitoring. Her office put out a press release saying she had saved the college from shutting down.

Other colleges have also appealed to their members of Congress for relief from the department’s financial sanctions.

Jay’s Technical Institute, a for-profit cosmetology school in Texas, has appealed to its members of Congress, who have forwarded their request to the department. But it has been met with limited success. The institute has remained on the most stringent level of heightened cash monitoring for four years, ever since a department audit uncovered problems with how it was documenting students’ eligibility for student aid, according to the school’s owner, Ollie J. Hilliard.

Hilliard said she understands the initial purpose of applying more scrutiny to their aid payments after the audit, which also imposed a fine for improperly awarding Pell Grants that the school is still trying to repay to the department.

In the meantime, though, Hilliard said that heightened cash monitoring “seems like it’s somewhat punitive.”

“It’s been a very challenging situation,” Hilliard said, noting that it takes about 45 days for federal aid funds to be reimbursed to the school. “We’re a small institution.”

Separately, the institute was on the verge of losing all of its federal aid last year because its cohort default rate was too high. But the school successfully appealed and no longer faces that threat, Hilliard said.

**Arbitrary Penalties?**
Aside from the transparency issues, some colleges and other observers of the process said they think the department’s use of heightened cash monitoring can be arbitrary or, at least, counterproductive.

A department official rejected that criticism, writing that the decision to place the restrictions on a college’s access to aid is based on a “careful assessment of the acceptable level of risk to students and taxpayers.”

“Our risk analysis process is not publicly disclosed to protect the sanctity and integrity of [federal student aid] programs,” the official added.

Dennis Cariello, a lawyer who represents colleges and previously worked for the department, said that heightened cash monitoring is a “very big hammer” the department has in its toolbox.

Cariello said that the sanction could sometimes exacerbate the problems that the feds are trying to guard against.
“If you have a school that is having financial difficulty so much that the government is worried about the security of federal dollars and they put them on HCM2, it kind of protects new funds,” Cariello said. “But it potentially puts the school at greater risk of closing, which can stick taxpayers with an even bigger bill.”

Sheriff's department investigates stolen camels, cows

By Alan Burdziak

Wednesday, March 25, 2015 at 10:30 am

Livestock thefts happen on occasion in Boone County, but the latest incident has branched into uncharted territory for sheriff’s investigators: Detectives are working to figure out who stole two double-hump camels Monday along with two Black Angus cows.

The owner of the animals, who lives in the 1100 block of West Botner Road north of Columbia, discovered the thefts at about 5 p.m. Monday, Boone County sheriff’s Detective Tom O’Sullivan said. The owner told investigators the theft had to have happened between 11 a.m. and 5 p.m., as the man called the sheriff’s department soon after he found the animals missing and the gate to their pen open.

“This is kind of an unusual case now,” O’Sullivan said. “Even as much agriculture as we have here in Boone County, we don’t seem to be getting a whole lot of livestock thefts.”

While cattle theft is not unheard of, O’Sullivan said the department is working to figure out why someone would steal two 9-foot-tall camels and where they would possibly take them.

“What I know about the camel market couldn’t fill a thimble,” he said.

All four stolen animals are adults, O’Sullivan said. The cows weigh between 900 and 950 pounds each, and the camels are about 3½ years old. O’Sullivan said he did not know how old the cows are or how much the camels weigh.

Cattle rustling is fairly common in rural areas with a lot of agriculture, said Ronald Plain, an agricultural economics professor at the University of Missouri. Selling stolen cows can be done with relative ease for someone who already sells cattle legitimately because they would
know potential buyers and it would not necessarily raise any red flags, Plain said. Camels, though, are a different story.

“I don’t know how in the world you try to unload camels,” Plain said. “That’s kind of a conspicuous, rare animal” to sell and most likely would raise suspicion.

Cattle go for about $1.85 per pound, Plain said. If the culprit sells the cows, he said they could bring in about $3,300 or more.

Stealing cattle requires the person to have experience rounding up the animals as well as equipment that likely would include a truck and trailer to load the cows into, Plain said. Like any theft, Plain said, the challenge is to do it quickly to avoid detection.

COLUMBIA MISSOURIAN

MU student Jake Loft not shy about City Council ambitions

Thursday, March 26, 2015 | 6:00 a.m. CDT; updated 6:30 a.m. CDT, Thursday, March 26, 2015

BY LIYING QIAN

COLUMBIA — Jake Loft knows exactly what he wants and makes a habit of pursuing it.

An only child from Grafton, Illinois, the 20-year-old Loft said the whole idea of "always knowing exactly what to do" comes from his single mother, who was his first role model.

"She always knows exactly what to do and always makes sure that I can do whatever I want," Loft, a senior information technology major at MU, said.

What Loft wants now is to be the next representative of the First Ward on the Columbia City Council. He’s one of nine candidates from which First Ward voters will choose during the municipal election on April 7.

When Loft was younger, he wanted to be a businessman in charge of a major company. After he went to Jersey Community High School in Jerseyville, Illinois, he started taking computer programming classes, and he fell in love with the science immediately.
After he graduated from high school in May 2012, he continued his interest in computers by pursuing a bachelor's degree at MU.

"I like to do things that I’m good at," Loft said. "I was good at computers, so I thought this could be a career."

Loft also enjoys hunting deer, ducks and turkeys. He first hunted with his grandpa when he was in sixth grade and recalled the experience as quick and successful.

"I picked a brand new shotgun and killed a turkey with the first shot," he said. "My grandpa said he had never seen a better shot than me."

Loft's favorite thing about hunting is building a connection between animals and the hunter. "If you want to catch the animal, you really need to be the animal," he said.

Loft is also a music lover, who can play at least six instruments. He started playing saxophone and piano when he was in fifth grade. In high school, he taught himself how to play guitar, French horn, trumpet and clarinet, and he joined the school's concert and jazz bands. He and some friends formed a band that plays ska, reggae and other genres. He has played occasionally with them in Illinois or in Columbia at venues such as The Bridge or at MoJo's, now the Rose Music Hall.

Loft had his first exposure to politics came when he took an advanced-placement government course as a senior in high school. He said the teacher, Ben Gracey, inspired him to make a difference in the world.

"He is the kind of guy who is not only super knowledgeable of what he was doing, he also wanted to make sure everyone understands and appreciates (the government) just as much as he does," Loft said.

Gracey called Loft a "social animal" who "can walk in a room of farmers and figure out something to talk about, or he can walk in a room of businessmen."

"I'm a big believer in that the best teacher is a teacher that has done something else. They have other interests. I think it's the same with political leaders," Gracey said.

After Loft came to Columbia to attend MU in fall 2012, he volunteered for Republican state Sen. Kurt Schaefer’s election campaign. Loft knocked on doors. He made phone
calls. This past fall, he did the same for Chuck Basye, another Republican, who won the 47th District seat in the Missouri House.

Loft also helped with the petition drive to recall former First Ward Councilwoman Ginny Chadwick.

"It’s very vibrant community, especially the First Ward," Loft said. "The city is a really interesting political landscape. Everybody is very interested in what’s going on in local government ... There are a lot of different political ideologies around."

Loft said he wants to increase accountability and build trust between residents and government.

"I want to make sure that I’m available to help anyone, and that’s why I’m running for the City Council," Loft said. "Some people don’t have a voice in the government, and I want to provide that for everyone. I want to make sure people can do what they need to do."

Gracey said he learned about Loft’s candidacy for City Council several weeks ago on Facebook.

"I believe wherever Jake is living, if issues come up, he is going to contribute to the dialogue," Gracey said.

Tyler Lacy, a high school friend of Loft’s, said the candidate is ambitious and a loyal friend.

"My family loves him, and my fiancé’s family loves him," Lacy said. "He is a fun person to be around regardless of the circumstance."

Loft said he always aims to be a leader able to make positive changes, to be available to help anyone and to do something big. Loft said successful leaders should be trustworthy and approachable.

"I want to be the kind of guy that people would like to go out with and get a coffee and have a talk, not that they just vote for and move on."
India Simpson is a junior at MU studying Textile and Apparel Management. She took a screen-printing class last semester and had one of her pieces featured at the Women in the Arts Gallery Show sponsored by the MSA/GPC Craft Studio on March 12. This From Readers was transcribed from an in-person interview.

The print is called "Greed." For my second project I just didn't know what I really wanted to do. At the time I was really thinking, "Man, I should start making money off my art." That’s what made me want to do this. I feel guilty for wanting to make money off my art instead of creating as an outlet.

I had this picture that I took of my ice cream cone at this place called Rainbow Cone in Chicago. I saw that and it inspired me because it is a ginormous ice cream cone that is just way more ice cream than anyone should ever eat in one sitting. It just made me think of overindulgence, wanting too much and being greedy.

It led me to think of this capitalistic attitude of wanting too much, just wanting to have money and not really caring about really what you are putting out in the world as long as you can make money off of it.

I thought the Eye of Providence in the background looked really cool because I really like geometric patterns and shapes and the Eye of Providence is also on the dollar. So I thought it would make sense if that was the backdrop for the print. It took me about five weeks to make the whole piece. I dedicated about 10 hours a week to it.

I was really excited that someone actually bought it at the show. I only priced it at $85. Everybody laughed at me. But I think it is really ironic that I got so much criticism for selling my print for so low when the print is all about anti-capitalism. It was my first show, and I was just really excited to get in.
Some people accidentally call my piece a painting, but screen-printing and painting are two different things. My piece was all done with a screen, and you use ink, not paint. It's basically printing by hand. Anything you can do in Photoshop and print on a printer, you can do it by hand. I like to describe it as old school Photoshop.

First, you need a silk screen. It is just a frame with silk-like mesh fabric in it. The fabric has teeny tiny holes in it, so that’s how the ink gets on the paper. One process is to photo mechanically burn the screen. For this, you would make a negative image transparency, and put it over a light box with the screen. You apply photo emulsion on the screen because that’s what burns the image onto the screen. Then let the light burn the image into the screen.

Or you can do it by hand and fill in the screen yourself. The screen filler is a clay-like substance that you wash off when you’re done. When you use screen filler, it's kind of like you are painting into the screen that way you can hand create whatever you want in the screen.

So for my print, I used both processes. The back was made photo mechanically. So I made that pattern in Photoshop, and then I just printed it on a transparency and then I burnt that on my screen. The hand and the ice cream was hand reduced. So each and every shape and color you see, I filled in.

With screen-printing, you have to apply each color layer by layer. Mine was a 16-color reduction, so 16 times I filled in all the spaces that I wanted printed, and then I just printed the color. Usually, only about six colors are used in screen-printing, so my piece was pretty complex.

I didn’t know anything about screen-printing before I took the class, except that it’s a tool they use to print T-shirts. I thought, "Oh I’m a TAM and major, maybe this will be useful."

I really just fell in love with the process and the craftsmanship it takes. You kind of have to be a mechanical person to screen print because you are basically doing the same thing over and over again. I really like how much you can do with it. It just looks cool to me.

This story is part of a section of the Missourian called From Readers, which is dedicated to your voices and your stories. We hope you’ll consider sharing.