



**MU News Bureau**

*Daily Clips Packet*

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# ST. LOUIS POST-DISPATCH

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## Mizzou rolls out lofty goals for bolstered enrollment, graduation, employment

By Ashley Jost St. Louis Post-Dispatch

**ST. LOUIS • The University of Missouri-Columbia has new goals when it comes to enrollment.**

Actually, for graduation and employment, too.

Mizzou leaders unveiled five lofty five-year goals Monday that tie back to the central theme of growth at the state's flagship university.

The plan includes increasing the number of freshmen and undergraduate transfer students by about 17 percent, and boosting the school's four-year graduation rate by about 9 percent.

The plan has been in the works for months, and leaders say it's not driven entirely by the recent decline in freshman enrollment.

"We've never had a strategic enrollment management plan," said [Pat Okker, dean of the College of Arts and Science](#). She was a co-organizer for a committee that helped choose the goals. "We've had admissions plans, but this is a much larger project. There certainly is a need for this because of enrollment challenges, but we would have had to do this regardless."

Over the next five years, the university wants to increase the freshman-to-sophomore retention rate to 93 percent from 87 percent. Mizzou already has the second-highest retention rate of freshmen to sophomores in the state, trailing only Truman State University.

Another goal is to increase the number of graduates to 10,000 by 2023 — a jump from 9,150 graduates in the 2016-17 school year. The number includes undergraduate and graduate students.

Finally, Mizzou leaders hope to see 95 percent of all students employed or in graduate school within six months of graduation. Okker said the university is trying to figure out the current rate.

Some MU programs already market heavily to prospective students using employment rates. The School of Journalism, for example, [touts a 97 percent rate](#) of students going on to work or graduate programs.

[This effort is a directive of Mizzou leadership](#), though the University of Missouri curators have “put their stamp of approval” on it, according to Board of Curators chairman Maurice Graham.

Okker said it’s possible the goals could change as the next five years unfold.

“No one can predict what higher ed will look like in three or four years,” she said. “These are ambitious goals. I’m proud of the campus.”

The announcement comes on the heels of multiple scholarships and grants aimed at attracting [more low-income students](#) and [out-of-state students](#). The school also announced price cuts to some [on-campus housing options and meal plans](#).

According to a timeline published Monday, the enrollment committee hopes to have a plan by spring for achieving these goals.

**T** COLUMBIA DAILY  
TRIBUNE

## [University of Missouri sets new goals to increase enrollment, grad rates](#)

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By: Rudi Keller

**The University of Missouri wants more new incoming freshmen and transfer students to enroll over the next five years but it also wants them to graduate faster.**

The draft goals of the Strategic Enrollment Management Committee, unveiled Monday during a campus forum, don't set a target for total campus enrollment, which is down 13 percent since fall 2015. Instead, they are designed to improve student success by increasing retention rates and making sure graduates can find jobs, said Pat Okker, dean of the College of Arts and Science and co-chair of the committee.

"Our goal is to help students graduate, not to keep them on campus," Okker said in an interview Tuesday.

The committee is one of three formed in the spring to address issues that are forcing budget cuts and program reductions on the Columbia campus. The other two deal with financing capital construction needs and evaluating which programs should see further cuts and which should receive additional funding.

The draft goals are open for comment from the campus and public through Friday. Next week, the final goals will be decided and the work of writing strategies and tactics for achieving the goals will be given to subcommittees and working groups. More than 100 students, faculty and staff are participating in the committee's work, Okker said, and the plan they create will be presented to the campus in March or April.

"There will be opportunities along the way to engage with these goals, strategies and tactics," she said. "This is not the end of the feedback."

The goals identified Monday are:

- Increase the incoming class of students to 6,000, including both new first-time college students and transfers. This year, there are 4,134 first-time freshmen and 996 transfer students, down from 6,191 first-time freshmen and 1,191 transfer students in the fall 2015 semester when overall enrollment peaked at 35,448.
- Increase the number of students receiving diplomas or otherwise completing their education to 10,000 per year. In the 2016-17 academic year, 9,150 students completed their studies.
- Put 95 percent of students completing their studies into employment or graduate school within six months. MU was unable to provide data on the current rates for employment or graduate school enrollment.
- Increase the retention of first-year students to 93 percent from the current level of 87 percent. While MU does better than other campuses in the UM System, retention is below the rates achieved at Vanderbilt, Texas A&M and the University of Florida, Southeastern

Conference schools that are also members of the American Association of Universities.

- Boost four-year graduation rates 20 percent from the 44 percent achieved by the 2010 incoming freshman class. A four-year graduation rate of 52.8 percent would match Texas A&M's rate for its 2010 class but would be below the rate achieved by Vanderbilt and Florida.

Based on the incoming class of 2013, the most recent class that has completed four years, MU is already halfway to the goal for graduation, with 48 percent of students finishing within four years. The data from 2010 is being used, campus spokeswoman Liz McCune said, because it is the latest year that allows comparisons with other schools.

On June 2, UM President Mun Choi announced [nearly \\$100 million in budget cuts](#) across the system to cover tuition and state funding shortfalls and to make money available for reallocation to other programs. The cuts reduced employment through the system by 474 full time jobs, including 342 positions at MU.

The job cuts included 91 staff layoffs and 65 non-tenured faculty who retired or were not offered a contract renewal.

The other two committees formed in the spring to look at long-term issues, the [Resource Allocation Model Committee](#) and the [Capital Financing Advisory Committee](#), are still in the preliminary stages of their work.

The budgeting group has been gathering information to educate members on the budget issues they must address, campus spokesman Christian Basi wrote in an email.

“Since many of these individuals are not finance professionals, they have been undergoing a very intense educational process, learning about our financial model as well as other financial models used or proposed in higher education,” he wrote.

That phase is nearly complete, he wrote. A report on the committee's recommendations is due late in the spring semester or early summer, he wrote.

The capital finance committee has not met because the Board of Curators was working on a new process for approving construction projects, Basi wrote.

All of the enrollment committee's goals are long-term, Okker said. The committee did not set a goal for overall enrollment or what the mix of first-time students and transfer students should be in the group of new students admitted every year, she said.

And the goal of 6,000 new students per year isn't a cap, she said.

“I do not see us getting to a point where we are turning away students,” Okker said.



## [Making a case for health literacy](#)

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### Generated from MU Health press release

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention estimates half of the adult population in the United States may have inadequate health literacy skills.

**The inability to understand and effectively use health information is linked to higher rates of hospitalization, reduced preventive care and increased health costs. A new report by researchers at the University of Missouri School of Medicine's Center for Health Policy highlighted the benefits of health literacy for both patients and providers.**

“Health literacy can improve the value of care for everyone,” said Karen Edison, M.D., director of the MU Center for Health Policy and contributing author of the report. “When patients are given health information in a way they can understand, they tend to make better health decisions.”

Authors of the report used previous evidence-based research to show how health literacy can achieve four main goals, also known as the “Quadruple Aim.” The Quadruple Aim is based on enhancing quality of care, improving community health, reducing health costs, and improving patient and provider experiences.

“The Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services estimates health expenditures will cost the U.S. \$3.5 trillion in 2017,” said Stan Hudson, M.A., associate director of the MU Center for Health Policy and lead author of the report. “We know from previous research that limited health literacy increases costs not only for the U.S. health system, but also for patients and providers. Based on cost analysis of that research, we estimate sufficient health literacy could save \$105 to \$175 billion each year.”

Hudson and his colleagues interviewed health literacy professionals and conducted a survey to learn about existing educational programs. The interviews and survey focused on community health, and how patient and provider experiences were affected by improved health literacy.

“The relationship between health literacy and health outcomes is very important,” Hudson said. “We found that low health literacy is a contributing factor for readmission for chronic conditions such as diabetes, heart disease and cancer. From an ethical standpoint, it also plays a vital role in equitable care. Health literacy helps ensure the best quality of care for everyone.”

Although the MU report identifies the important role of health literacy, Hudson suggests that more research is needed to show long-term benefits.

“Evidence of short-term outcomes support the effectiveness of many health literacy interventions,” Hudson said. “However, there are no studies that examine long-term outcomes, especially as they relate to public health and prevention. This is an area we need to study more.”

“Improving health literacy will involve working with providers to communicate more effectively,” said Edison, who also serves as the Philip C. Anderson Professor of Dermatology and chair of the Department of Dermatology at the MU School of Medicine. “We also need to empower patients and their families through educational and outreach strategies. Ultimately, we need to create opportunities for patients to understand their care as they navigate the health care system.”

The report, “Improving Health and the Bottom Line: The Case for Health Literacy,” recently was presented to the National Academies of Sciences, Engineering, and Medicine at the Roundtable on Health Literacy workshop in Washington, D.C. Funding for the report was provided by the Health and Medicine Division of the National Academies.

# The Washington Post

## Colleges puzzled by surge in FAFSA verification requests

**By: Danielle Douglas-Gabriel**

Colleges and universities are reporting a surge in students being asked to verify information on their federal financial aid applications, a time-consuming process that school officials fear could derail low-income applicants.

Every year, about one-third of all students who fill out the Free Application for Federal Student Aid, known as FAFSA, must provide further proof that the information they supplied is accurate. The U.S. Department of Education can flag students for verification at random, but the odds increase if their application is incomplete or contains discrepancies. College financial aid administrators say they always anticipate contacting some students for additional documentation, but the numbers this year have skyrocketed. And they don't know why.

University financial aid administrators say they are astonished by the rate of verifications. Many have received about the same number of FAFSA submissions as they did last year at this time, but the number of students being flagged has doubled in some cases.

“The department has sophisticated people that we hope are building in appropriate selection criteria in the methodology, but this year, there is no rhyme or reason to what they’re doing,” said Mary Sommers, director of financial aid at the University of Nebraska at Kearney. “Did something change? We’ve heard nothing to date.”

The Education Department’s Office of Federal Student Aid said it is aware of the issue and working to fix it. The department bases verification selection on several factors, including application patterns from the previous cycle, and some significant changes last year affected this year’s selection.

Not only did the FAFSA season kick off in October instead of January, but changes were made in the requirements for tax information. That meant the patterns of when and how people applied for aid also changed, meaning the formula the department used in verification shifted.

On top of that, the Internal Revenue Service Data Retrieval Tool, a popular online resource that lets students transfer tax return information, was disabled because of hackers. All of those factors have contributed to the higher than usual number of verification requests, according to the department.

Officials say they are working to make the appropriate adjustments, and schools should see a reduction in students being flagged in several weeks. The student aid office plans to issue guidance to colleges and universities as soon as it has a fix in place.

In October alone, several public and private four-year colleges reported that the proportion of FAFSAs flagged for verification increased as much as threefold compared to the year before, according to data from the National Association of Student Financial Aid Administrators. The trade group did not disclose the names of the schools.

Around this time last year, Sommers said about 15 percent of new and returning students at the University of Nebraska at Kearney were selected for verification, but now 40 percent, or 890 people, have been flagged. The problem is especially acute among students who automatically qualify for a “zero” expected family contribution, meaning their household income is less than \$25,000 a year. Out of 160 applications with that designation, 130 have been selected for verification, Sommers said.

She worries that students who are the first in their family to attend college will be discouraged by being flagged and become weary of the application process. Sommers also works with Latino parents in the midst of becoming citizens who are nervous that verification will negatively affect their chances. Though she tries to allay those fears, Sommers is concerned those families might convince their children to consider only schools they can pay for out of pocket, or forgo college altogether.

With billions of dollars in loans, grants and scholarships at stake, verification is meant to reduce the risk of fraud for the federal government and the colleges that use the FAFSA to determine student aid eligibility. The education department says it also wants to ensure that students have full access to the financial assistance to which they are entitled.

Over the years, the department has streamlined the application process by allowing families to use the IRS tool to upload tax return information. Financial aid administrators say the data retrieval tool is supposed to lower the chances of being flagged because it mines verified information, but an increasing number of students who used it since the application went live in October have been selected for review.

One Midwestern public research university said 30 percent of students who used the data tool this FAFSA cycle were flagged, compared to only 8 percent the previous season, according to the financial aid association. Another private college in the Pacific Northwest said more than 28 percent of families who used the IRS tool are being asked for more documentation, nearly triple a year ago.

**Nicholas Prewett, director of financial aid at the University of Missouri, said the proportion of students who used the IRS tool and were selected for verification soared from about 7 percent to 30 percent. He finds the numbers troubling because the tool has been promoted as an easier path to completion, yet students are still running into problems.**

“This means increased workload for our staff and our students,” Prewett said. His staff must contact and collect additional documents for more than 5,100 students who had been flagged for verification through Nov. 4, a caseload twice as high as the same period last year. “We try to process these in a couple of days, but if you’re looking at double the number of students. . . . It’s a lot more work, which is going to lead to additional backlog for our students.”

Delays in completing verification could take students out of the running for aid awarded on a first-come, first-served basis. Most state financial aid deadlines are months away, so students who complete verification as soon as possible will still be eligible for that aid.

# MISSOURIAN

## **A little diamond in a big university: MU School of Music celebrates its centennial**

GRANT SHARPLES 1 hr ago (0)

**Julia Gaines was one of the youngest faculty members when she joined MU's School of Music in 1996 as a percussion professor. Now, as the school's director, Gaines is regarded as one of the senior faculty members.**

Plenty has changed in the school in the 21 years she's been there — and much more in the 100 years since what was then the Department of Music was founded in 1917. As the school marks its centennial, Gaines finds herself reflecting not only on the past but also big changes coming in the next few years, including the \$24 million phase one construction of a building.

"Everything will radically change with our new building," Gaines said. "It's really great that we're celebrating our centennial now, and then we're looking around the corner to a brand-new 100 years."

The centennial has given Gaines the opportunity to talk to people about the school.

"We're quite a little diamond here in the middle of this big university," she said. "Sometimes people don't know our excellence and our quality of our faculty and our students, so a centennial makes it easy for me to be able to talk to people."

Although the program has been spread across several buildings for decades, the current Fine Arts Building on Lowry Mall has been the hub of MU music since 1961, Gaines said. The new building, at Hitt Street and University Avenue, is scheduled for a spring 2020 opening.

Given the different locations, Gaines said it's challenging for faculty members and students to fully collaborate. She hopes the new building will foster a greater sense of community and attract more students.

With that in mind, the centennial symbolizes a new start for the school, Gaines said. A groundbreaking ceremony is set for April 8 as part of a weekend celebration.

"We're going to close out our first 100 years seeing what is coming," she said.

W. Thomas McKenney, a composer and retired composition professor, joined the faculty in 1967. Looking back, McKenney said, "One of my charges when I came to the university was to start and build as best I could a composition program."

Today, the program is steadily gaining in stature — built not only on the labors of McKenney, composer and teacher Stefan Freund, retired composer and teacher John Cheetham and others but through an infusion of financial support from Jeanne and Rex Sinquefield. McKenney pointed to the Mizzou International Composers Festival as an example, an annual event in July that draws new talent and features the prestigious new-music ensemble Alarm Will Sound.

"We have composers from all over the world that are in attendance for that," McKenney said. "We have Pulitzer Prize-winning composers here who are interacting with these resident composers. It's really becoming a world-class event."

Although he's retired, McKenney still feels excitement for the centennial because he feels a connection to the school.

"I think it's pretty significant," McKenney said. "The University of Missouri itself is not a new institution. It seems to me appropriate that there would be a music program that would have this kind of longevity to it."

Starting with the formation of the Cadet Band in 1884, this timeline includes Marching Mizzou's performance at the 1985 World Series — the "I-70 Series," when the Kansas City Royals bested the St. Louis Cardinals — as well as Sheryl Crow's benefit concert for the School of Music in 2015.

The first celebratory event was the Centennial Kick-Off Concert on Sept. 25. The next big round of celebrations will be April 7-9, to which the school will invite alumni and dignitaries. The annual Chancellor's Arts Showcase will be April 10.

Gaines has also asked faculty to program works this year that have been significant to the school in the past 100 years. The history behind these pieces will be described in concert program notes.

Michael Budds, a curators' teaching professor and musicologist who came to MU in 1982, is compiling a book on the school's students and evolution.

"First of all, one of the most important parts of it is a timeline," Budds said. "I, with the help of all kinds of people, have gone through the history of music at the University of Missouri."

Starting with the formation of the Cadet Band in 1884, the timeline includes Marching Mizzou's performance at the 1985 World Series — the "I-70 Series," when the Kansas City Royals bested the St. Louis Cardinals — as well as Sheryl Crow's benefit concert for the School of Music in 2015.

Along with the timeline, sections are dedicated to demographic diversity, honorary degrees and students' memories of the school. The book is filled with personal anecdotes and commemorative photographs.

"If I had written a history of the School of Music at the University of Missouri, people would have looked at it and thrown it away," Budds said. "But I'm presuming that many people will look at this book and find the memories of their time."

Budds is also interested in the changes the School of Music has experienced, such as academic content.

"For example, for 30 years or so, I taught a course called 'Jazz, Pop and Rock,'" Budds said. "My teachers never would have thought of having a course like that being taught at a university."

Budds said this change is a natural process, describing it as organic.

"They don't teach chemistry the way they used to teach it. They don't teach English literature the way they used to teach it," Budds said. "Everything keeps going through these interesting processes of growth and understanding."

Patrick Graham, a fifth-year vocal performance major, said he has had such positive experiences with the school's faculty that he switched his major from journalism to music.

"Looking back at five years, there's a lot of really talented faculty in the School of Music who really invest a lot in their students, who really care about their research and their scholarship," said Graham, a former student representative on the UM System Board of Curators.

Graham's long-term goal is to go into academia. The school's faculty has played an important role in inspiring him.

"Seeing how dedicated the faculty are to the School of Music, how much they care about their students, that's really something that's important to me," Graham said.

Although Gaines is not an alumna of MU, she feels deeply connected through teaching and performing at the school and now leading it.

"I don't have those kinds of memories of getting my education here," she said, "but I think it's certainly significant that we have this kind of history, and I'm certainly proud of it."

## THE CHRONICLE OF HIGHER EDUCATION

### Why the U. of Maryland Is Hiring a ‘Hate-Bias Response Coordinator’

By SARAH BROWN

Officials at the University of Maryland at College Park say their decision to hire a full-time “hate-bias response coordinator” reflects that a new normal has taken hold in higher education, one in which white supremacists and other hate groups are targeting campuses more than ever before.

Maryland announced the new position on Monday as part of a broader retooling of its procedures for responding to reports of bias on the campus. The coordinator will manage [a new bias-response team](#) as well as meet with students affected by hate incidents and help design training and education on diversity and inclusion issues.

The move comes six months after Richard Collins III, a black student at Bowie State University, was [fatally stabbed](#) by Sean Urbanski, a white Maryland student, while visiting friends on the College Park campus. Mr. Urbanski has since been charged with a hate crime and indicted by a grand jury. [He was a member of an extreme-right Facebook group](#), Alt-Reich Nation.

Roger Worthington, Maryland’s chief diversity officer, said the university wants to fill the new post with someone who has “extensive professional expertise” in dealing with hate and bias in higher education and, potentially, some background in mental health.

“The need for a full-time hate-bias response coordinator is part of the University of Maryland’s effort to comprehensively address the issues in the context that we’re in at this moment in time,” he said in an interview.

Several student-affairs administrators said they had not heard of another institution that had hired a full-time staff person devoted solely to hate- and bias-response work.

**Hate-bias incidents on campuses are nothing new, Mr. Worthington said, noting that he had to coordinate the response to a neo-Nazi march in 2007 at the University of Missouri at**

**Columbia, when he was the chief diversity officer there. It's also difficult to say for certain whether there has been a recent uptick in such incidents.**

What feels different now, he said, is the intensity with which hate groups are trying to stir up trouble at Maryland and elsewhere.

“People are coming onto college campuses and posting or committing hate and bias incidents that are intended to provoke — to get college students or even employees on campuses to make mistakes that violate their civil rights in some way and draw attention to their cause and even potentially recruit new members,” he said. “This is something that we didn’t even fathom 10 years ago.”

Multiple hate-motivated incidents have rocked the university over the past year. Weeks before Mr. Collins was fatally stabbed, [a noose was found](#) hanging in the kitchen of a Maryland fraternity house. On at least three separate occasions since last year’s presidential election, [white-supremacist posters](#) have been placed around the campus. After Donald J. Trump was elected president, people with far-right, racist, and sexist views felt emboldened to speak freely.

Following Mr. Collins’s death, Wallace D. Loh, the university’s president, created a task force on bias and campus safety, and announced a collaboration with the Anti-Defamation League, among other things.

The new coordinator will work in the Office of Diversity and Inclusion. Per [the revised procedures](#), reports of hate or bias can be filed with the campus police department or the Title IX office. Once a report is received, the diversity office will be notified. Then the coordinator will convene the bias-response team and offer support services to whoever has been affected by the incident, Mr. Worthington said.

If the person making the report is a student, the coordinator will reach out to him or her directly and “might spend some time working through a conversation with them about what happened and what their options are,” he said.

“If it’s a group or an entire community,” he continued, “there might be different ways of responding.”

A log of hate-bias incidents will be posted on a new website, and students, faculty members, and staff members will be able to opt in to a notification system that sends emails once a complaint has been received, Mr. Worthington said.

Bias-response teams at other institutions [have been criticized](#) for, according to some observers, infringing on the free-speech rights of students and others. Mr. Worthington said figuring out a balance between upholding free speech, supporting diversity and inclusion, and preventing hateful incidents is at the forefront of the minds of many college presidents and diversity officers.

“We’re all struggling to find the right path forward,” he said.

# MISSOURIAN

## Supermoon will brighten the sky this weekend

BY CAMERON R. FLATT 14 hrs ago (0)

On Sunday night, the most notable object in the sky will not be a bird or a plane, but the 2017 supermoon.

**A supermoon occurs when the moon reaches its perigee at the same time it is in the full moon phase, said Angela Speck, MU director of astronomy and professor of astrophysics. This makes the moon appear 14 percent larger and 30 percent brighter than usual.**

The perigee is the point in a moon's orbit when it is closest to the Earth's surface — about 222,000 miles away, according to space.com. The moon's elliptical orbit causes its distance from the Earth to vary by 30,000 miles.

The full moon will rise around 4 p.m. Sunday and reach its perigee at 4:45 a.m. Monday.

The best time to view will be just after sunset on Sunday when an optical effect will cause the moon to appear bigger and brighter than when it is high in the sky, according to National Geographic.

Speck said that both the full moon and perigee happen once each month, but because of the Earth's orbit around the sun, they don't always coincide.

The supermoon phenomenon will happen only once this year, but last year it occurred three months in a row, October, November and December. In 2016, the moon was the closest it had been to Earth since 1948.

Next year, there will be two January supermoons, one Jan. 1 and 2 and the second on Jan. 31.

Speck said an important aspect of the supermoon is that it helps us understand eclipses. She explained that variations in both the Earth's and the moon's orbit explain why we don't get a total eclipse every month.

Every month's full moon has its own name, according to National Geographic. December's full moon also goes by the aliases "cold moon" and "oak moon." Speck also said that some native American tribes call it the "long night moon" because it is the closest to the winter solstice.



## [One Columbia business is flying high with drone photography](#)

By: Ben Brady

Watch the story: <http://www.komu.com/news/one-columbia-business-is-flying-high-with-drone-photography>

COLUMBIA - Last spring, Jacob Thompson's aunt came to him with an idea.

She is a real estate agent, and told him to start his own photography business using drones. **Thompson, a 22 year-old political science major at the University of Missouri, plans to join the Air Force after graduation.**

Thus, [Jet Streak Photography](#) was born in September 2016.

"The growth has been really exponential," Thompson said. "Here in Columbia there was really no competition at all, probably up until seven or eight months into establishing the company."

Drones are helping make businesses more efficient, from real estate to construction to agriculture.

Thompson started Jet Streak a month after the FAA came out with [regulations](#) for using drones commercially.

“You had to get an exception and go through a lot of hoops with the FAA before Part 107 came out in August of 2016,” Thompson said. “Once the drone regulations came out, I kind of said ‘this is my time’ so that is when we started.”

Thompson and other companies in real estate and agriculture are adding drones because of how it can affect their bottom lines. Farmers can scout their crops cheaply and real estate agents can show a unique view of their properties.

“It is like the next level as far as what you can offer a seller to be able to take a picture of the aerial,” real estate agent Wendy Swetz said. “I think it is a necessity at this point.”

Swetz said having drone footage is another element she can use not only to bolster high-end real estate but any property.

“I feel like it really encompasses the actual property itself as far as all of the lot formation,” she said. “If it is on acreage you can really see the front of the house, the back of the house. It has just given a really specific, beautiful way to see all of the home in one direct shot.”

Not only has drones given real estate agents a new way to see a property, but they have made the process faster.

“In years past, to get a property photo you would have to get up in an aircraft and physically take that photo from the aircraft,” Thompson said. “Where as now you can take a three pound drone with a [rotating camera] and take that photo in as quick as ten minutes.”

For Thompson, being quick with how he shoots properties is big for driving his business. Since January 2017, Thompson said they have shot over 300 listings.

“I think the Air Force has done a lot for me in my ability to become a leader and further myself as an individual,” Thompson said. “Drones was just one stepping stone to getting me to a point where you know where I just want to fly. When I am done here at school I just tell my fiancé that is all I want to do is fly.”