

WHAT LIES AHEAD

Four finalists named in search for president

SIDNEY LOWRY
Managing Editor | @sidney_lowry

After beginning the search last fall, the Northwest Board of Regents announced the names of the finalists in the search for a new president at its Jan. 26 meeting.

The four candidates are Michael Godard, provost of Southeast Missouri State University; David P. Jones, vice president for student affairs and enrollment management at Minnesota State University - Mankato; Kent Porterfield, vice provost of student affairs at Gonzaga University; and Lance Tatum, senior vice chancellor for academic affairs and chief academic officer at Troy University.

MICHAEL GODARD

Godard has been the provost of Southeast Missouri since 2019 along with being a professor of exercise science. He earned his bachelor's degree in exercise science from Castleton University, a master's degree in exercise physiology at Adelphi University and doctorate in human bioenergetics at Ball State University.

Before being selected as provost, he was interim provost and chief learning officer and vice provost for enrollment management and student success at University of Central Missouri. He also worked as the associate director of the honors college at Western Illinois University, the director of the Applied Physiology Laboratory at the University of Kansas and the director of Cardiology Stress Laboratories at Beth Israel Medical Center in New York.

DAVID P. JONES

Jones is the second finalist for the position. He has served as the vice president of student affairs and enrollment management at Minnesota State University - Mankato for 11 years. He earned his bachelor's degree in secondary education from State University of New York College - Oswego, a master's degree in community counseling from the University of Nebraska - Kearney and a doctorate in educational police, planning and leadership at College of William and Mary.

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Preliminary meetings show tuition increase

SIDNEY LOWRY
Managing Editor | @sidney_lowry

The preliminary Fiscal Year 2024 budget was presented at the Jan. 26 Board of Regents Workshop, and it shows another increase in tuition but a decrease in board prices due to a new contract for the dining hall.

Vice President of Finance and Administration Stacy Carrick put forward the numbers during the workshop, starting with a 7.1% increase in tuition for undergraduate resident students and a 6.6% increase for undergraduate non-resident students.

Designated University fees and course fees were shown to go up by 7.1%. She said the University would see a 3.2% net increase in revenue from the raise due to the mix of enrollment.

"So as that on ground, online, undergrad, grad, resident, non-resident mix changes, that changes what we collect and our scholarships," Carrick

said. "When we raise our rates ... they on average don't pay that full rate increase because of scholarships."

When it comes to room costs, it was presented to go up 10.5% due to the rise in costs of utilities and the shelter and rental rate for the area. Board costs are looking to go down by 17.2% in alignment with the new dining contract.

Carrick said there are three different dining plans, and they are basing numbers around the middle plan that is predicted to be the most popular.

With these changes, undergraduate resident students would see an increase of around \$459, and undergraduate non-resident students would see a net increase of \$527.

Carrick said Northwest has been told that Missouri Gov. Mike Parson is going to increase state appropriations by 7%, allowing a 3.8% net for \$1.3 million.

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MAKAYLA POLAK EDITOR-IN-CHIEF

Regents Shanda Durbin, Mel Tjeerdsma, Debby Roach, Regent Chair John Moore and Interim President Clarence Green sit in a line at the front of the room during the Jan. 26 Board of Regents meeting.



MAKAYLA POLAK EDITOR-IN-CHIEF

Northwest Board of Regent Chair John Moore, Regent Debbie Roach and Regent Mel Tjeerdsma clap after a recognition from Mary Collins. The Regents held its first meeting of the year following a morning workshop in the J.W. Jones Student Union Ballroom Jan. 26.

New program helps small businesses in Maryville reach larger audiences

ALYNA THIBAUT
Missourian Reporter | @TheMissourian

Greater Maryville Chamber of Commerce announced a new program called Lunch Local, where it will dedicate the last week of each month to a different eating establishment. It started the first month off with Clear Creek Catering.

This program is designed to help small businesses in Maryville grow bigger audiences. After COVID, many businesses took a huge hit like Carson's Sports Grill, which shut down completely. Supply chains delayed, mandated closures and employees wanting to avoid coming back to work took many small establishments out of business.

After two years, businesses are still struggling to stay open and find employees and customers. Becky Albrecht is the executive director for the Greater Maryville Chamber of Commerce. Albrecht hopes Lunch Local can help small businesses still struggling in Maryville get back on their feet.

"The idea is to boost their revenues and give the restaurant exposure," Albrecht said in an email to The Missourian. "Maybe Lunch Local will inspire someone to visit an establishment they've not yet been to. Once they try it, maybe they will be impressed and start eating there on their own."

February is dedicated to the long-time establishment The Hangar, which many know as a movie theater, but it is much more than that. It's a place you can go with your friends or family and take a break, eat lunch or dinner, kids can play in the playpen and arcade and even after all of that fun, you can go enjoy a relaxing movie with your family or friends.

The Hangar was built by owner Tad Gordon in 1999, and originally, it was a dinner theater with a full-service restaurant. Gordon said it was actually one of the first dinner theaters in the country.

Gordon learned that it was a struggle to keep the dinner theater business consistent. He decided he couldn't keep doing the dinner theater so he closed down the restaurant for a couple of years.

"Our success was totally dependent on Hollywood," Gordon said. "It's hard to run a restaurant depending on someone else to bring in your customers."

He then took this time to brainstorm ideas and how to fix these issues he was experiencing with the dinner theater. Then COVID hit and it became difficult for Gordon to bring his ideas to life. The pandemic also stopped the production of Hollywood movies. Gordon realized movies weren't gonna be the future of The Hangars success.

"My goal is to grow business in Maryville not compete with business in Maryville," Gordon said.

After COVID, his restaurant plans started to become real. The Hangar became an entertainment place for families and friends to enjoy time together.

Gordon even took himself and his old general manager to Goodfellas Pizza School in Staten Island, New York, to learn how to make his favorite style of pizza. He took serious steps to bring this style of pizza to Maryville. Gordon said he needed the experience, the ingredients and the correct method in order to master the art of pizza so he could build his menu.

The Hangar now features a brick oven stove exactly like the ones in pizza school, an arcade, a playpen area for younger children, a full menu and a dining room and it even hosts events. Its newest addition is curbside, people can now go to its website and place an order for curbside pickup.

SEE BUSINESSES | A4



ALYNA THIBAUT MISSOURIAN REPORTER

The Hangar is most notably known for its movie theater and also features a spot for arcade games. Recently, The Hangar has started offering curbside pick up on its website.

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History of Black resistance celebrated

ALYNA THIBAUT
Missourian Reporter | @TheMissourian

February is dedicated as Black History Month which marks the remembrance and acknowledgment of the struggles and the oppression Black people faced throughout U.S. history.

Justin Mallett is the assistant vice president of the Office of Diversity and Inclusion and is committed to working and collaborating to create a lasting transformative change for all.

"I think it's important for students to participate because I believe in expanding your knowledge space," Mallett said. "Being able to come to a college campus, if we don't do our job to provide the opportunities for our students to learn about different cultures, statuses, identities then we are cheating our students out of their college experience."

The Association for the Study of African American Life and History picks a designated theme for Black History Month each year to bring more attention to the public about the developments that merit emphasis. For 2023, it chose Black Resistance.

"Black Resistance is looking at the various oppressions that in particular for Black History Month, that Black people had to overcome in order to have some of the freedoms that they have today," Mallett said.

FEBRUARY BLACK HISTORY MONTH EVENTS

THURSDAY,
FEB. **2**

Black History Mobile Museum

10 a.m. to 3 p.m. in the J.W. Jones Student Union Boardroom

WEDNESDAY,
FEB. **8**

Movie "I am Not Your Negro"

6 p.m. in the J.W. Jones Student Union Boardroom

MONDAY,
FEB. **20**

Art Exhibit "Bias in America"

Until March 17 in the J.W. Jones Student Union Living Room

INFOGRAPHIC BY SAVANNAH ATHY-SEDBROOK ASST. DESIGN EDITOR

The Office of Diversity and Inclusion, Black Student Union and Minority Men's Organization will all be hosting a variety of activities for students to learn about the history and historical leaders that fought through oppression they faced.

It will start out the month from 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. Feb. 2 with Black History 101 Mobile Museum that was founded by Detroit Public School educator Khalid El-Hakim. Then at 6 p.m. Feb. 8 in the J.W. Jones Student Union Boardroom, it will show "I am Not Your Negro." Lastly, Feb. 20 to March 17 in the Olive DeLuce Art Gallery the Art Club, a student organization of the Department of Fine & Performing Arts, will present an

art exhibit looking at a variety of biases in America in their visions.

Northwest has a wide variety of multicultural organizations for students to join feel connected and have a safe space to connect with their peers. Some of the Black organizations on campus include the Black Student Union, Minority Men's Organization and three historical Black Greek fraternities — Alpha Phi Alpha, Omega Psi Phi and Phi Beta Sigma — as well as one historically Black sorority, Delta Sigma Theta.

African Student Organization brings international students closer and spreads awareness and the African culture to

our community. The Black Student Union mission is to embrace Blackness in all forms by creating an environment for students to educate, take action and bring awareness. Dawn Yel Iverson is the vice president of BSU, and the organization will partner with DI to host a Black History Month spirit week Feb. 20-24.

To keep the conversation going outside of this month it will host and partner many events on campus and it has even held panels for example having "Uncomfortable conversations with a Black man."

"I just feel like Black History Month is such tied in with the past because it's supposed to be celebrating and bringing aware-

ness to the past," Iverson said. "If you don't talk about the history, then it is bound to be repeated."

MMO's goal is to help build stronger men on campus and have them advance from their stereotypes and learn from other men. It provides academic and career help as well as help with any questions students have.

Darren Ross is the president of MMO and an advocate volunteer in many organizations on campus. Ross said the organization is a safe space for males that are struggling in any aspect in their life. It will provide resources like tutoring sessions, resume building and even just simple advice. It's a space for males to come together, and hopefully they will go out and help others become better as well.

MMO is planning to throw a scavenger hunt around campus that will teach students about different historical Black figures. The organization will also be participating in the DOI events that will be hosted during this month as well.

"Black History Month to me, it means that there is a chance for us to express ourselves as black people especially on campuses and institutions that don't really celebrate Black history as well as they should," Ross said. "It helps others people stay aware of Black figures not only in the past but currently and the problems we face in the world."

Girl Scouts learn skills during cookie season

HANNAH CLAYWELL
Asst. News Editor | @Hannah_9504

Girl Scout Cookie season is about to make its way to Maryville. This season is a huge opportunity for Girl Scouts to make advancements.

Chief Brand and Marketing Officer of Girl Scouts of NE Kansas and NW Missouri Gina Garvin said there are five skills the girls are learning during cookie season: goal setting, decision making, money management, people skills and business ethics.

Product Program Manager of Nodaway County Sara Bax said this is a good opportunity for the girls to complete badge work and improve their business skills.

"It's kind of their own little business, in a way, where they market their cookies and are able to use the proceeds

to complete badge work, go camping and just other activities throughout the year," Bax said.

Being in a smaller town does have differences from larger cities. The program itself is run the exact same, but it is very different when related to cookie sales. A smaller community's troops may have 20-plus girls of varying grade levels, which makes it harder to give girls turns. Garvin said there are also potentially fewer people to sell to within the community.

"It's really how girls put their sales plan together," Garvin said. "... I love that I see that happening all over the council and not just in one area over the other, so it's not like a bigger city girl has more of an opportunity to do that than a smaller city girl."

There is a lot of work that goes into being a Girl Scout, and

they are constantly learning new skills. Cookie season is something that requires a lot from the girls. Girl Scout Emily Bax said that being a girl scout is definitely not for everyone.

"Cookie season can be a little overwhelming in the beginning, but once you get into that, you can be more calm and ready for it," Emily Bax said.

She said her favorite part of Girl Scouts has been the experience and the friends she has made. Some of the skills she has learned are horseback riding and making dog toys.

"It's just been a good opportunity to be involved in the community and help girls gain leadership skills and learn new things that they maybe necessarily wouldn't find if they weren't a part of Girl Scouts," Sara Bax said.



ILLUSTRATION BY MAKAYLA POLAK EDITOR-IN-CHIEF

Cookies will be coming locally in a couple of weeks. Garvin said she can not be sure of the college impact but suspects that a good amount of the sales are from the college students.

"Those college kids are also going to local grocery stores and gas stations and all the places our girls are during the season,

so I know that they're great purchasers of cookies," Garvin said.

The cookie prices have increased to \$6 from \$5 a box, but all proceeds that go back to the girls stay local. There are 10 different flavors, and customers are able to order all these flavors online or at booths when the cookies are available.

Northwest continues to go green, educates students about recycling

LAKEN MONTGOMERY
News Reporter | @lmontgomerymiss

Race to Zero Waste is an annual eight-week competition partnered with the National Wildlife Federation to promote recycling and help reduce waste throughout the nation. Northwest has been participating in this contest to help keep the campus as green as possible.

Energy and Sustainability Manager Troy Brady said the main goal for this competition is to get waste out of the environment and prevent the waste from ending up in landfills.

"Northwest generates around 600-700 tons of waste in any given year by programs like Race to Zero Waste and our recycling program, which was one of the first in Missouri, diverts over 50% of our waste from the landfill," Brady said. "It goes many different ways, it is a recycling program as well as a reducing program. That's what we want in any successful program, we want people to think about how they use things."

The Sustainability Department wants to use this contest as an opportunity to teach people how to reduce their waste.

The competition started Jan. 29 and will continue until March 25, just prior to Earth Day. Not only does this event help take away trash and waste from the city while improving environmental quality, it also serves as an educational opportunity for students to learn the impact their trash has.

The event has many different categories schools can participate in, some examples include per capita, compostable and total diversion percentage. Around 300 participating colleges across the nation report weekly of the data observed of campus wide recycling. Then the schools are ranked under different categories including food service organics, cans and bottles.

Northwest has won three times while under different categories. Once for total diversion, another for Food Service Organics and once for per capita.

Total diversion means that the campus is observed on how much waste is diverted as a whole. Other categories such as Food Service Organics, how much food goes into composting and per capita, meaning it is calculated on how much trash is being diverted for each student on campus.

In 2015, Northwest ranked first out of seven Missouri competing schools while under the Food Service and Organics category. This past year, Northwest ranked 58 in the nation overall and 47 under the Food Service and Organics category.

"Today over 1,000 colleges and universities in the U.S. and Canada have participated in the Campus Race to Zero Waste (formerly RecycleMania) program, recycling, donating and composting more than 1,064 million pounds of waste and preventing the release of nearly 1.62 million metrics tons of carbon dioxide," according to Campus Race to Zero Waste.

Northwest doesn't only promote recycling during these three months, it has measures to keep recycling going year round. Northwest has had a power plant in operation for around 100 years. Since the early '80s, it has transitioned to be fueled on wood instead of coal.

"Northwest has been recycling and reusing its materials since the late '70s to early '80s, so we're not new to it," Brady said. "There are folks who need the education, that's what I hope this program does for them."

Northwest has also been working with the Arboretum since 1993 to improve the number of species of trees and botanical diversity across campus. "It is home to more than 1,700 trees and more than 160 species while providing an environment that is both beautiful and conducive to teaching and research," according to Northwest Missouri Arboretum website.

Northwest has spent over a hundred years to apply solutions within reducing waste and improving recycling and sees this program as a good educational opportunity to teach students about their impact.

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PHOTO ILLUSTRATION BY SYDNEY COOK DESIGNER

'CATS IN BLAZERS

Signature jackets, signs spark celebrity status for students

RIVER BOYD
Sports Reporter | @RiverBoyd5

Last year, at a Northwest football game, then-junior Nick Verwers had an idea to get onto the jumbotron — buy one of the blazers, covered in Northwest logos, at Walmart and wear it to the game. Little did he know, he set in motion the creation of the Bearcats in Blazers. “My roommate Jackson Weddle and I were in Walmart,” Verwers said. “We started laughing at the blazers, and we decided to get them because we went to a football game. We stood in the front row for one of them and we’re like, getting up on the jumbotron. Then, we’re like we have to wear these blazers on the jumbotron all the time.”

At first, it was just Weddle and Verwers going to games and having fun, but then a couple of their roommates joined in which led to friends like junior Connor Stone joining in on the fun.

After gaining new members, Verwers and his friends began to bring Big Macs and ‘Big Mac sack’ signs to games. Verwers said this helped gain more attention and eventually led to what the Bearcats in Blazers are to this day.

“Coach (Rich) Wright and his wife kind of picked up on it, and then we really blew up when coach Wright brought us on to his radio talk show,” Verwers said. “From there, we just kind of started adding more people to the group and made more signs.”

There are 20 people in Bearcats in Blazers. Stone said not everyone can go to every game so having 20 people helps the group have somebody at games.

Stone and Verwers said there are a lot of highlights from last semester and are looking forward to making more memories this semester.

“Coach Wright even came up to us after games and ate a Big Mac in the stands with us, arms around each other singing the alma mater,” Verwers said. “He invited us on the field a couple of times. He was super cool.”

The Bearcats in Blazers are about having fun and hanging out with people in the stands while supporting Northwest. The group never expected to gain so much attention and fandom so when it happened the group was surprised.

Now, members get recognized around campus and Maryville and have gotten to interact with people like Interim President Clarence Green.

“It’s weird man, I’m not even going to lie,” Stone said. “At the end of the day, we all just bought \$30 blazers at Walmart and made some signs. It’s weird to get recognized for something like that, but it’s fun. I really enjoy it. It’s cool that it’s become something like that rather than just friends hanging out at the game.”

Last semester, the Bearcats in Blazers got to make their

way to the Northwest football games and make their presence known in different states. Verwers said the trips were fun and worth the 3,000 miles he put on his car to go to the football playoffs and the MIAA Volleyball Tournament.

In order to go to both football playoff games, some of the members drove a total of 35 hours. Stone said going to the playoff games was an amazing experience.

“Easily one of the best experiences I’ve had in my college career,” Stone said. “I didn’t get to go to Arkansas, but I got to go to Michigan and just have fun with the other guys, getting to hang out and go to a football game. It was such a cool time, cool environment and a great game.”

The Bearcats in Blazers try to have fun with new signs at every game and new gimmicks while wearing the signature outfits. Verwers said coming up with new bits and sign ideas is a terrifying experience.

During a Northwest men’s basketball game Dec. 10 against Nebraska-Kearney, a new idea was brought into the mix. For every 3-pointer made, Verwers had to eat a hotdog. The final number was 11. He ate 11 hotdogs during the game.

“Everyone will see our ideas in full force,” Verwers said. “I have prepped some ideas. I have no idea how well they’re going to go over.”

Lots of the ideas the group comes up with relate to the opposing teams, while others are made up on the spot.

Verwers and a few of the other members are seniors, but the Bearcat in Blazers plan to stay strong next year.

“I know for sure the guys who are going to be here will go because we love it,” Stone said. “There’s no way we’d want to give this up. We have a couple of younger guys who come around so hopefully, we can see it keep going even after we leave, but I know for sure I’ll be there.”

This year the Bearcats in Blazers have gained 425 followers on Twitter and are well-known around campus. Stone said the entire experience has been rewarding and fun to make connections and do things he hasn’t before.

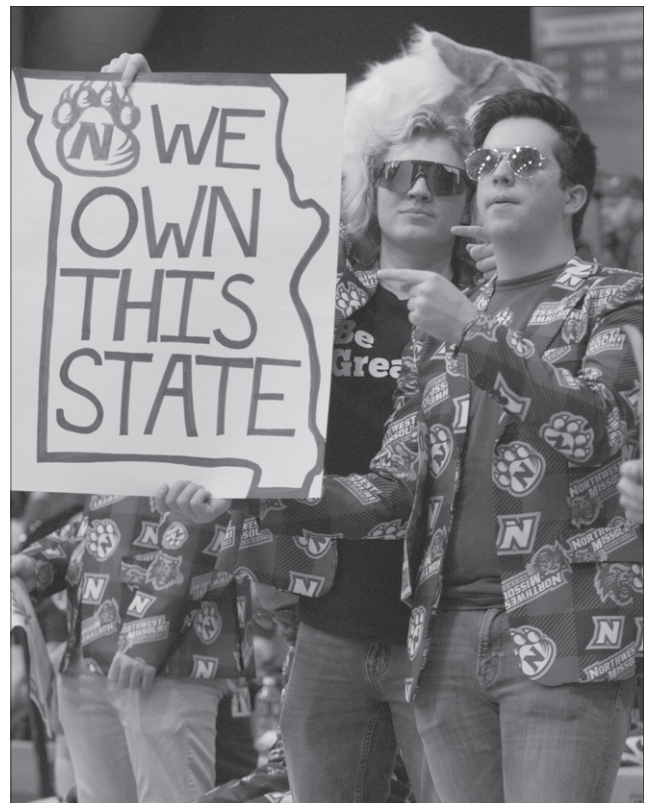
Verwers said the whole experience was something he never expected and is very grateful for the opportunity to be a part of the Bearcats in Blazers. He also said there’s plenty of room for more members.

“Anybody is welcome to join us if you’re willing to just put on a blazer,” Verwers said. “Even DM us on Instagram or Twitter with an idea of what we should do for a sign or a distraction for free throws in basketball. We just want to make it a big community kind of feel rather than just an exclusive group.”

“We’re definitely just thankful that everyone has been super about it and that everybody enjoys it,” Stone said. “It’s been fun to make people laugh, make people smile and it’s fun to see the reaction that people on campus have.”

“At the end of the day, we all just bought \$30 blazers at Walmart and made some signs.”

-NICK VERWERS



MAKAYLA POLAK EDITOR-IN-CHIEF

Two members of the newly organized group of Northwest student fans, Bearcats in Blazers, hold up a sign reading “We own this state.” Varying members are known to hold up many different signs throughout the duration of games to cheer on the Bearcats.

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CRIME LOG

for the week of Feb. 2

Maryville Department of Public Safety

Jan. 30

A summons was issued to **Jeremy M. Miller**, 32, for driving while suspended on the 1600 block of South Main Street.

Jan. 29

A bicycle was recovered on the 800 block of East Seventh Street.

Jan. 27

A summons was issued to **Izabel M. Sanchez**, 18, for a minor in possession on the 300 block of North Market Street.

Jan. 26

There is an ongoing investigation for burglary on the 2000 block of East First Street.

A summons was issued to **Addison J. Barrow**, 21, for driving while intoxicated on the 1000 block of South Market Street.

There was an accident between **Donna S. Patton**, 73, and **Kristen N. Nielsen** on the 100 block of West Edwards Street.

Tools were recovered on the 30000 block of U.S. Highway 136.

Jan. 25

A summons was issued to **Marie A. Coffelt**, 29, for driving while intoxicated and careless and imprudent driving on the 100 block of West Third Street.

There was an accident between **Dustyn L. Losh**, 21, and **Ocean N. Neal**, 23, on the 300 block of North Market Street. **Losh** was issued a citation for careless and imprudent driving.

There was an accident between **Isabella E. Girard**, 18, and **Marvin W. Peirson**, 72, on the 500 block of West Fourth Street.

There was an accident between **Abigail M. Waits**, 20, **Caysie D. Creason**, 21, and **Aaron J. Ziola**, 51, on West Second Street and North Main Street.

A summons was issued to **Kaitlyn C. Wilbers**, 19, for possession of a fake I.D. on the 100 block of North Vine.

Jan. 24

There was an accident between **Maddison E. Hovenga**, 22, and **James M. Feick**, 37, on the 2900 block of South Main Street. Hovenga was issued a citation for careless and imprudent driving.

There is an ongoing investigation for burglary on the 2000 block of East First Street.

Jan. 23

A summons was issued to **ShiYa M. Patrick**, 19, and **Isabella G. Rodriguez**, 20, for larceny on the 1600 block of South Main Street.

There is an ongoing investigation for burglary on the 2000 block of East First Street.

Jan. 22

There is an ongoing investigation for assault on the 300 block of North Market Street.

There was an accident between an unknown driver and **Kaitlyn S. Zerr** on the 500 block of West 11th Street.

Jan. 21

There is an ongoing investigation for stealing on the 100 block of South Vine Street.

Jan. 19

There is an ongoing investigation for burglary on the 2000 block of East First Street.

Jan. 18

A summons was issued to **Ryan T. McLeathen**, 38, for failure to register a motor vehicle, failure to maintain financial responsibility and not having a valid driver's license on the 2000 block of East First Street.

A summons was issued to **Jeremy G. Laun**, 41, for failure to appear in court on the 100 block of North Vine Street.

BUDGET

CONTINUED FROM A1

This preliminary budget also includes a 4% cost-of-living-adjustment. Healthcare coverage and benefits are also expected to increase in the next fiscal year.

Carrick said a lot of these numbers tie back to enrollment. Northwest's goal for enrollment for the FY 2024 budget is 8,850, but is only budgeting for 95% of that. Carrick said the University is down in continuing students, and the last of the large classes of students is graduating this May.

"Strategic enrollment obviously is a top priority to help us balance the budget," Carrick said. "I mean, volume is what brings revenue in. We are seeing that the market is highly-competitive with declining student demographics."

Carrick said the University of Missouri has changed to lower admission standards, allowing students who may not have been able to get in before to be admitted. She said this is happening at many universities, and is now taking away

students from Northwest. Continuing students at Northwest is projected to go down, causing a decrease in budget.

7.1%

tuition increase was seen in the preliminary budget for Fiscal Year 2024.

"We're losing a lot of our on-ground students because of the demographics," Carrick said. "We're just not able to recruit. ... The pool is smaller than it has been in the past."

When it comes to the Auxiliary budget, Carrick said a lot of it depends on the freshman who live on campus. With a consistent decrease in freshman enrollment, there is a de-

crease in the budget. Carrick said Northwest is banking on freshman enrollment being up to raise revenue in auxiliary.

Carrick said though they are trying to bridge the gap in the budgets, she does anticipate needing to dip into the unrestricted funds that have been generated from the American Rescue Plan Act and other areas over the next five years depending on enrollment.

Carrick stressed these numbers are not final, as her team and other offices are early in the process and are still working to have a more finalized budget in the coming months. "You will see some gaps," she said. "We do not have a balanced budget at this point in the process, that is normal. Thankfully the gap is not as big as it has been in some years, but obviously it's always a challenge when there's a gap."

The current gap for the Education and General budget is \$900,000 and the gap for the Auxiliary budget is \$1.3 million. Another presentation of the budget will come to the Board of Regents for approval in March.



KAYLA ALLISON MISSOURIAN PHOTOGRAPHER

Student Senate gathered in its 'game day ready' attire repping the Kansas City Chiefs Jan. 31. To start the evening, President Elizabeth Motazedi opened the floor for discussion on new Homecoming bylaws for 2023.

Senate talks Homecoming bylaws

HANNAH CLAYWELL
Asst. News Editor | @Hannah_9504

Student Senate discussed one of Northwest's largest events — Homecoming. The 2023 Homecoming bylaws, themes and candidates were voted on during the Jan. 31 meeting.

Homecoming Executive Board Representative Riley Steele discussed bylaw changes that will be enforced next Homecoming.

"Every year following Homecoming, the executive board meets and discusses what went well for that Homecoming and what needs to be changed," Steele said in an email to The Missourian.

The parade participants are allowed to submit a 35-word or less summary of the entry, last Homecoming there were longer summaries that weren't filled, all jalopies, a motorized, decorated platform, are required to have a viewing win-

dow. Paper mache heads are not allowed to go past shoulders and failure to disassemble the structure will result in disqualification.

Participants are allowed to bring chalk, scripts must now also include a prop list and music selection. All music must be converted to MP3 and emailed to the Homecoming Executive Board, backdrops must be digitally created and converted into a PDF. Instagram likes now go towards winning.

"While Homecoming is all about having fun and connecting with the community, we also want to ensure everyone participating or not, to be safe," Steele said in an email to The Missourian.

Senate Members voted on its Homecoming theme idea which is Movie/Blockbuster and nominated President Elizabeth Motazedi and Student Affairs Representative Joe Connelly for royalty.

Three organizations came to Senate to ask for appropriations. Treasurer Jillian McNamara said the current Organizational Finance Committee budget is around \$14,735.

Representative for the Navigators Alyssa Grout came forward to ask for an appropriation of \$1,471.96 for new sound system equipment. Senate appropriated the full amount to the Navigators. "I think that it's important that we got the money because it will allow us to share the gospel," Grout said.

The Behavioral Science Association requested \$1,500 for the annual I Will Listen Event. This event aims to reduce the stigma surrounding mental health. The main activity held is an art exhibit, but there are multiple other things students can participate in, like yoga and other resources. Senate appropriated the full amount.

Tau Kappa Epsilon - Delta Nu Chapter President Corbin McClintock came to Senate to request \$1,500 for reimbursement for the registration fee of the Regional Leadership Conference. Senate voted to appropriate the full amount.

Four new members were sworn into Senate — Freshman Class Representative Allison Huynh, Sophomore Class Representative Trenton Jones, Off-campus Representative, Callie Spunaugle and associate member Alora Bucey.

"I just think Northwest creates a very fostering environment and it feels like home and I want to be a part of that," Spunaugle said.

Senate Advisor Kori Hoffmann touched on the new fee committee and said that it is not permanent and will only have around four meetings throughout the semester.

PRESIDENT

CONTINUED FROM A1

He has also served as the associate vice president for student affairs and enrollment management and interim vice president for information and technology services. He started his career in teaching as a social studies teacher in Carlisle, Iowa. Before working at the University of Minnesota - Mankato, Jones was the assistant vice president for student affairs and executive director of housing and residential communities at the University of Alabama.

KENT PORTERFIELD

Porterfield has been the vice provost of student affairs at Gonzaga University since 2020. He has his bachelor's degree in history and physical education and a master's degree in educational administration from Northwest and a doctorate in educational leadership and policy analysis from the University of Missouri - Columbia.

As the provost of student affairs, Porterfield has had senior leadership over the division with diversity, equity and inclusion; the Center for Community Engagement; the Lincoln LGBTQ+ Resource Center; the First Generation, Transfer, Veteran and Returning Adult Students Office; the Unity Multicultural Education Center and more. Before working at Gonzaga, he served as the vice president for student development at Saint Louis University.

LANCE TATUM

Tatum is the final candidate for the 11th Northwest president. He has served as the senior vice chancellor for academic affairs and chief academic officer at Troy University since 2019. Tatum has a bachelor's degree in physical education and a master's degree in foundations of education from Troy State University and a doctorate in sport management from Florida State University.

As vice chancellor, Tatum has oversight of 32 academic departments, the supervision of leaders overseeing multiple of-

ices and is responsible for all aspects of the university's academic mission, such as strategic planning, budgeting, supervising, reviewing programs of instruction, research and continuing education. Before working at Troy University, he served as the vice chancellor at Troy University's campus at Montgomery, Alabama, and multiple other positions at the university. He has also held faculty positions in sport and fitness management at Gordon College in Barnesville, Georgia.

All of the candidate's biographical information came from a Northwest press release.

Board of Regents Chair John Moore, who also serves as the chair of the 15-person presidential search committee, said each candidate will have public forums for stakeholder groups during their visits to campus in February.

"I think I can comfortably speak on behalf of the entire search committee in saying that we were extremely pleased with the people who applied in the first place, the process we followed and with this slate of panelists, of candidates we will be bringing forward to you over the next couple of weeks," Moore said.

Porterfield will start off the campus forums Thursday, Feb. 2. Jones will be visiting campus Tuesday, Feb. 7. Gordard's public forum will be held Thursday, Feb. 9. Tatum will be the final on-campus forum Thursday, Feb. 16.

The student forums for each candidate will be at 2 p.m. in Room 210 in the Carl and Cheryl Hughes Fieldhouse. All stakeholder meetings will take place at 3:15 p.m. in the Mary Linn Auditorium at the Ron Houston Center for Performing Arts or via Zoom. People have the opportunity to submit input on the candidates via an online survey for up to two days after the campus visit.

Before the candidates come to campus, Moore will be holding an information session about the presidential search at 3 p.m. Jan. 27 via Zoom.



ALYNA THIBAUT MISSOURIAN REPORTER

A cook at The Hangar, Gavon Combe, waits on a customer. The Hangar will be the next feature for Lunch Local.

BUSINESSES

CONTINUED FROM A1

Eric Wheeler, general manager for The Hangar, has been with them for nine years. He has seen the business grow from just movies to a food and entertainment establishment. Marketing Manager Cassie Farrell hopes Lunch Local will bring new people in to see how the restaurant has grown.

"Tad's big thing is always doing community outreach, partnering with other businesses and helping each other out. So this is definitely a big help there," Wheeler said.

The Hangar offers deals mostly every day. Monday is buy one, get one free sandwich on online orders. Tuesday you can buy one pizza and get one half off for online orders. Wednesday you can buy one adult ticket and get two kids tickets free. Friday is happy hour from 5-7 p.m., and Sunday is free movies. For the last week of February, it will be adding a deal on Thursday for half-price flatbread melts and bread bowls.

HBCUs aren't the only places for inclusion



CORBIN SMITH
Guest Columnist

The most important factor in deciding which university to earn your degree at is how comfortable you feel when you visit campus.

Many students should agree with that because they're essentially choosing the birthplace of their adulthood. For students of color, it's almost always been the most important factor in choosing where to study. It's the sole reason Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCUs) were created as degree seekers were persecuted for wanting to better themselves through education.

In the not-so-distant past, those in search of higher education had no choice but to attend universities with people of the same race. As we know, the merging of diverse backgrounds in places of learning has been challenged for decades, and the struggles for equity persist. However, the ever-growing acceptance of these backgrounds aid in the development of young adults.

As I move toward graduation, the University continues to showcase its dedication to equity and inclusion. The Office of Diversity and Inclusion should be used as an example of how quickly a campus can turn into a home for people of all backgrounds.

For the 2021-22 school year, Northwest reported its student body to be roughly 4% Black, 5% Hispanic/Latino and 82% white. It has made that 4% feel like more than just 4%. It's beginning to feel like inclusion is no longer a foreign concept.

In 2021, Black students made up approximately 13% of the college population. The U.S. Department of Education reported that 7% of Black students attended HBCUs while 53% attended predominantly white institutions (PWIs).

However, numbers never provide the same justice a lived experience does. Yes, PWIs can be exclusive, feel out of touch and often practice diversity in order to fill a quota. Sometimes, people of color attend a university and lose their cultural identity in order to cater to the status quo.

There are cases of elitism stemming from attendees of HBCUs that can be as harmful to the Black community as suffocation via whitewashing.

At the end of the day, everybody has their own path to who they become. For the individual, it's their job to forge a path and walk down it confidently. For the institution, its job is to facilitate an individual's journey and offer tools for self-realization and growth.

In the case of Northwest, the University has grown its endeavors of diversity and inclusion each year I've attended. It has challenged people to see beyond the scope of rose-colored glasses through education, entertainment and conversation. It has engaged students and challenged them to broaden their limits of comfortability.

Let your experiences shape your identity, not the title of a school. HBCUs don't make you Black, and PWIs don't make you white. If anything, the discomfort of being in an environment that's not your own aids in the growth of whatever identity you hope to grow.



HAILEY JOHNSON-NESSER CARTOONIST

OUR VIEW:

People, law enforcement need more transparency

The people of Missouri have voted, recreational marijuana is legal. This wasn't something we were expecting, but in just under a week, anyone 21 years or older will be able to use it.

As of Feb. 6, the historically controversial substance will soon be available to those of age. As the date soon approaches, The Editorial Board wants to remind you that though we are aware it is legal, it's important to stay cautious.

The recreational use of marijuana will come with restrictions, as do all other legal substances. Without them, the world would break out into chaos.

First and foremost, on-campus usage is prohibited. For everyone, including students, faculty, staff and visitors, the use of marijuana products remains under the same restrictions as before. We encourage you to continue following those rules in place — they exist for a reason.

Similarly with alcohol, public intoxication also includes the use of marijuana. It's important to make sure we follow these laws to ensure a safe environment, avoiding the possibility of more laws being put in place. Not only are you putting yourself at risk, you are putting others at risk as well.

There is nothing wrong with us-

ing marijuana, but making sure that you are not disturbing others is imperative. For those living in apartments or even close to neighboring houses, the smell may be bothersome to others around you. The smoke from marijuana tends to linger and disperse easily, understanding the smell doesn't just stay in your vicinity is not only crucial, it's respectful.

With a dispensary in town, easy access to the products are available. We strongly urge you to buy from places with a license. Buying marijuana from the person down the street may be considered easy for some, but alongside it being illegal to buy from someone without the permit, it's also dangerous.

There is no certainty in the products. Police reports and news stories have shown that marijuana can be easily laced with other substances, possibly leading to deadly or life-threatening situations. Buying from a dispensary ensures quality products, safe for use.

Mindfulness is key when we start thinking about keeping the laws and restrictions off of marijuana usage. Yet, there are also things law enforcement need to keep in mind as well.

Making sure laws and restrictions are clearly stated to the public and there is no confusion will make

the transition smooth. The legalization passed, now it is up to law enforcement and lawmakers to ensure a safe community.

Placing signs in public areas and outlining the laws in places you can buy marijuana would be an easy start. It takes a single piece of paper on the door of Sunrise Dispensary to keep people out of jail cells.

Transparency — it's the one thing we ask for. The minute the laws are set in place, the public needs to know. Without informing people in a safe and effective manner, you are simply asking for trouble and laws to be broken.

Though there is not a high population when it comes to diversity in the city of Maryville, Black people are five times more likely to be pulled over without cause. Let's not make that mistake with marijuana use as well.

Ensure the laws are equal for everyone — no exceptions. Those are our friends, colleagues and family. The color of their skin does not determine the likelihood of using marijuana.

Smoking weed can be fun, and for some, needed. The Editorial Board recognizes this, but we want to reiterate this information and ensure the laws are clarified efficiently to the public as the date approaches.

THE STROLLER:

Your Bearcat doesn't like 'Burrowhead'

What the fridge was that? I know I am supposed to be happy that the Chiefs are going to the Super Bowl, but I'm not sure I am.

Before you freak out, let me explain. Yes, they did it, and I am proud, but at what cost? If it wasn't for the two seconds I took to actually think about my actions, there was a high possibility that the nearest object to me was going to be thrown at the TV. Luckily, my cat never moved from the couch.

I have never been so stressed out and frustrated, not even last year when they lost. By the end of the game, more people were in the medical tent than on the field. That's not true, but if you told me it was, I'd believe you.

Don't get me wrong, I have a lot of pent-up anger right now and that could very easily be a major factor here, but I can't pretend my landlord isn't going to do inspections and question the hole in the

wall from the fourth quarter.

Possible anger issues aside, the Bengals got what they deserved. "Burrowhead" was probably one of the dumbest things that I have heard. I bet they are starting to regret making a joke of our stadium.

As for all the Bengals fans out there, how does it feel to lose? Actually, I don't need to ask that question, the only thing your team has going for you is a very average white guy that women consider attractive.

Wow, you can really see my angry sports fan trait peaking out just a little bit. I don't really care though. We are going to the Super Bowl. Imagine being so good that you win the AFC Championship three times in four years. The Bengals could never.

In the wise words of Travis Kelce, "Burrowhead my ass."

The Stroller has been a tradition since 1918 and does not reflect the views of the Northwest Missourian.

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Spoofhounds set for home game against Warriors

RIVER BOYD
Sports Reporter | @RiverBoyd5

Maryville boys basketball will play against St. Pius X Feb. 3 in Maryville High School gym. This is the first home game for the Spoofhounds since their 81-52 win against Red Oak Jan. 6.

The 'Hounds are undefeated at home this year with a record of 3-0, but they only have four more home games left in the regular season. Coach Matt Stoecklein said due to scheduling issues, his team lost some home games.

"It's important to have great games when you have that big home crowd," Stoecklein said. "Obviously, we want to win in front of so many more family and friends."

Maryville (14-4) scores an average of 63.3 points per game while the Spoofhound defense allows an average of 53.6 points per contest. Pius (1-12) averages just 45.3 points per game, and the Warrior defense allows an average of 64.7.

Stoecklein said the Spoofhounds' successful defense is because the team is focusing on keeping the ball in front of them.

"We've gotten so much better keeping the ball in front of us, then working on help-side after that," Stoecklein said. "Just keeping the ball in front of us means we don't have to worry about a lot of other things and a lot of other problems."

The last meeting between the Warriors and 'Hounds resulted in a 55-43 win for Pius. Since 2013, the Warriors and Spoofhounds have faced off six times. The Spoofhounds lead the series during that timespan 4-2.

Senior forward Keaton Stone said the key to beating Pius is the same as every week — play sound, fundamental basketball.

"Play good defense, take good shots and avoid the early 3s we like to take, that go in at a low percentage," Stone said. "We need to have good ball move-

UP NEXT

MHS vs. St. Pius X
7:30 p.m. Feb. 3
Maryville High School

MHS vs. Cameron
7:30 p.m. Feb. 7
Maryville High School

ment and just not let them score more than us."

The 'Hounds will hit the road Feb. 7 to go back to Cameron, Missouri, for a rematch against Cameron (8-8). It'll be a familiar occasion for both squads, as the Spoofhounds finished the Cameron Tournament 71-41 win over the Dragons Jan. 27.

This is the first of four rematches Maryville will have this season. Stoecklein said rematches can be challenging because the opposing team can make adjustments from the previous game.

"We played them and beat them by 30 so obviously we're going to make some adjustments on how we defend some players," Stoecklein said. "Obviously they can do the same thing to us, so we're not sure what they're going to throw on us."

Cameron scores an average of 54.4 points per game, while the Dragon's defense allows 56.6 points per contest. The Dragons and Spoofhounds have played three of the same teams, Bishop LeBlond (13-6), East Buchanan (11-4) and Savannah (2-13).

Maryville defeated all three, while Cameron lost to LeBlond and Buchanan but defeated Savannah. Stone said the key to his team beating the Dragons again is playing the same way it did the first matchup.

"We need to just stay on the same path we've been on this year," Stone said. "We just beat them by what I would call a decent amount the first time. I feel like if we play our kind of basketball, we should have no problem."



GRACE ROTHWEILER MISSOURIAN PHOTOGRAPHER

Maryville boys basketball senior guard Caden Stoecklein is guarded by coach Matt Stoecklein during practice Jan. 30. The Spoofhounds will face off against St. Pius X 7:30 p.m. Feb. 3 at Maryville High School.

HOME CONTINUED FROM A8

"In that game, we had 20 plus turnovers — which is a fundamental thing — but we can fix that. We also have Evelyn (Vazquez) coming back, and she's a great defender and quick. We also have Emma Atwood back, and she's also a great defender and can get boards, which really adds to the team," Kesten said.

Emporia has the No. 7 offense in the MIAA, scoring 68 points per game, and is the No. 9 defense in the MIAA, allow-

ing an average of 66.3 points. Northwest has the No. 10 offense in the MIAA, putting up 61.5 points per contest, and the Bearcats are the No. 6 defense in the MIAA, giving up 60.8 points per contest.

Freshman guard Ella Moody said the key to beating the Hornets this time around is defense.

"I think all of our games start with a defensive effort and what we do on defense brings energy," Moody said. "I think if we focus on defense and just play hard, I think we'll have a good game."

After the rematch with Emporia, the Bearcats will play

Washburn (9-10, 5-8 MIAA) for the first time this season.

The Ichabods have the No. 2 defense in the MIAA, allowing a mere 56.2 points per game. The offense, though, is at the bottom of the MIAA, with an average of 55.7 points per matchup.

"Defense is really important, but I think it's going to come down to who has more grit and who wants to gain more," Moody said. "I think if we go out with a lot of energy and a lot of effort, then I think that we will be the team on top, and we'll have more confidence and just play good basketball."

Coach Austin Meyer said

Washburn plays hard and with a lot of energy. He said Washburn's first-year coach Lora Westling, who played for the Ichabods between 2001-05, is doing a great job.

"We're going to have to make sure we look to push it a little bit more than the last few weeks when we get rebounds," Meyer said. "We just have to make sure we're shortening passes, getting open and moving the ball even against pressure."

The last time Washburn and Northwest clashed was Feb. 19, 2022. The Bearcats won 56-53 in overtime in Bearcat Arena.

Kesten said the Bearcats have the size advantage in the post, so

UP NEXT

NW vs. Emporia State
5:30 p.m. Feb. 2
Bearcat Arena

NW vs. Washburn
1:30 p.m. Feb. 4
Bearcat Arena

they should be able to get into the paint more.

"Getting offensive is going to be huge, as well as defensive boards," Kesten said. "We're a team full of shooters, so if we stay confident and shoot the ball like we know we can, then we'll be in the game."

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RIVALS CONTINUED FROM A8

He didn't need to be on the court, though. From being with his teammates from the sidelines, Schomers knows what it means for Northwest to go up against the only teams in the MIAA with multiple wins over the Bearcats in the last three seasons.

"You know, we've lost to Emporia three times in a row, so obviously it's kind of getting personal there," Schomers said. "Washburn always plays us tough. Washburn is always a good opponent. We just got to

11

consecutive seasons men's basketball has won 20 or more games.

get the job done this week."

Northwest will go into the game against Emporia on a five-game win streak. The Hornets will go into the game with a chance to become just the fourth team in the MIAA to defeat McCollum four consecutive times.

On offense, the Bearcats will have to try to find ways to score outside of the paint, as the Hornets are no strangers to contesting close-range shots. Emporia sophomore forward Mayuom Buom, who is No. 5 in the MIAA

UP NEXT

NW vs. Emporia State
7:30 p.m. Feb. 2
Bearcat Arena

NW vs. Washburn
3:30 p.m. Feb. 4
Bearcat Arena

with 1.1 blocks per game, leads a defensive group that is No. 2 in the conference in blocks with 91 — an average of 4.33 per contest.

Defensively, Northwest will be tasked with slowing down the MIAA's top scorer, Hornets' junior guard Owen Long. Through 21 games, Long is averaging 18 points on 43.6% shooting from the field.

"We need to make sure we're more ready to go than we have been," McCollum said. "Hopefully we will be."

Ahead of the Bearcats' second game of the season against the Hornets, Northwest has won 11 straight home games. The last team to defeat Northwest inside Bearcat Arena is Washburn, in a 60-59 thriller Feb. 19.

The Ichabods have won three straight contests inside Bearcat Arena, including with a buzzer-beater in the MIAA Tournament Championship March 6, 2021. Washburn, like Northwest, has won five consecutive games. McCollum isn't looking past Emporia, but he said he knows what to expect should the Bearcats and Ichabods meet with both teams holding onto a six-game win streak.

"They're good, they're tough, they play hard, they're physical," McCollum said. "We'll have our hands full."

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FILE Senior fullback Cooper Loe smiles after scoring on a 2-point conversion with senior wide receiver Delton Davis. Loe announced via his Twitter Jan. 21 he is staying in Maryville to join Northwest football.

Loe signs with Bearcats, opens up about journey to Northwest football

RIVER BOYD Sports Reporter | @RiverBoyd5

Maryville has two sports mascots in town — the Spoofhounds and the Bearcats. Cooper Loe, who has spent the last four years taking the field in the 'Hound Pound for Maryville football, will make the transition from Spoofhound to Bearcat in the fall of 2023.

Loe started his football journey in his fifth-grade year when he started with Bantam football. After two years, Loe played for the middle school team. After middle school football, Loe said he fell in love with football and knew he wanted to play in high school.

"It was very nerve-wracking because it's a great program, especially for being a (Class 3) program," Loe said. "I think everyone's going to be a little nervous going into the next level. I just think it's something you've got to get used to."

Through his four seasons for Maryville, Loe has played multiple positions. In his final year, he was mainly used as a fullback and linebacker. Loe said his senior sea-

son was bittersweet because he got to be a leader, but it was also the last season he got to take the field as a Spoofhound.

Loe got an opportunity to give coach Rich Wright his highlight film. What Wright saw on film was enough to earn Loe an official visit. His official visit led to an offer to join the football program at Northwest, and Loe announced via Twitter Jan. 21 he would join the Bearcats.

Loe will go from Fridays in the 'Hound Pound to Saturdays in Bearcat Stadium. His uniform will lose its yellow, keep its white and change its shade of green as it moves just a few minutes down the street. Loe said Northwest has a lot of talented players, and Maryville is a huge football town.

"On game days, the whole town kind of shuts down, and all the high school guys go to the college games, and I think that is pretty neat," Loe said. "I know a lot of people here, so it'll feel like home being able to still live in the same hometown, meet some new guys that go to college here and still have my buddies that live here."

Signee talks about being born without kidney, decision to come to Maryville

WESLEY MILLER Sports Editor | @wesleymiller360

Khamari Smith was told for most of his life he shouldn't play football. Smith, from Webster Groves, Missouri, was born with only one kidney, which led to people throughout his life telling him not to play the sport he loved.

"I couldn't even play football until sixth grade," Smith said. "... My whole life I was told not to play football."

It didn't matter what he was told. Smith continued to play, including for the past four years for Webster Groves High School.

Smith played on the offensive and defensive lines for Webster Groves. On defense, he was a defensive tackle and on offense, he was a guard. Throughout his career, regardless of where he lined up, he said he uses only having one kidney and the people who

doubted him as motivation.

After finishing up his senior season with the Statesmen in November, Smith will trade in the orange and black for green and white when he becomes one of Northwest football's newest players on National Signing Day Feb. 1.

"It's amazing," Smith said about his chance to play at Northwest. "I can't even describe it."

For the Bearcats, Smith will join a group of 26 offensive linemen from the 2022 season. He is also one of signees who are offensive linemen.

While Northwest wanted him to help pave the way for running backs and protect the program's quarterbacks, he said he wanted Northwest because of the family atmosphere.

"I came down on Family Day, and that was a great day," Smith said. "I chose to come down there to really experience

how people come and support the program. ... Northwest is really big about family. They're gonna make you feel like family."

The Bearcats are coming off of their 18th consecutive play-off appearance — a Division II record. They have also won the MIAA three times in the past five seasons.

The success and history of Northwest doesn't shake Smith. He said he's ready to get to work and going to a successful program will only push him to be better.

"It doesn't make me nervous, it makes me more determined to work harder to get a chance to play," Smith said. "A spot to play isn't guaranteed. I got an opportunity to play for this school, but I know my spot isn't guaranteed so it just makes me work even harder. It doesn't intimidate me."

Commit uses home as motivation to sign with program

WESLEY MILLER Sports Editor | @wesleymiller360

Eldora, Iowa, is an easy town to miss. With a population just over 2,600, the town's main strip on U.S. Highway 175 is just big enough for a HyVee and a Casey's.

In the southwest corner of the mid-Iowa town is South Hardin High School. For some, it's just a small school fit for its small town, but for senior Ryan Walters, it's home.

Or, at least it has been. After announcing his commitment to Northwest football via his Twitter page Jan. 23, Walters is set to move over 225 miles to Maryville to join the Bearcats.

"Not a lot of athletes get recruited heavily or get a chance to play college sports here, so that was definitely a driving factor for me," Walters said.

For South Hardin, Walters served as wide receiver on offense and a safety on defense. He'll

leave the defensive side behind when he becomes a Bearcat and will be tasked with catching passes for Northwest's quarterbacks.

He's had no problem with that responsibility up to this point in his career. In four seasons with the Tigers, Walters was named all-district wide receiver three times and was selected as an all-state wide receiver twice.

Coming from a small town helped motivate Walters throughout his career, but he said one of his biggest motivators to play football at the next level was his coach, Nick Eller. In April 2004, Eller signed a training camp contract with the Baltimore Ravens. Walters said Eller's experience and knowledge has helped him become a better player.

"He's definitely been a good voice in my ear to drive me into chasing my dreams and accomplishments," Walters said.

Northwest's 2022 roster had 20 wide receivers. With only one of those 20 graduating, Walters will have to set himself apart to earn playing time for a team fresh off its 18th consecutive play-off appearance.

Regardless of how many snaps he gets, Walters said he's just excited to get on campus and experience what Northwest has to offer.

"I'm most excited for the game day atmosphere," Walters said. "That was something I was really impressed with, how everybody comes together as a community."

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Bearcat football signs 32 players to team

High school football players, transfer-athletes and college football programs alike have been waiting for this day. National Signing Day is here, and Northwest football is part of many programs reaping the rewards of finding their next players.

High school athletes have gone on visits, tours and watched a few of the home games inside Bearcat Stadium. The wait is over, though, and Northwest's newest players are officially on their way to Maryville in the fall.

On a day specified for high school football players and transfers to officially decide where they're going in the fall, the Bearcats inked 32 new players to join their roster — 29 from high school and three from the transfer portal. While many athletes announce their commitment ahead of time, nothing is official until the pens hit the paper Feb. 1. Coach Rich Wright said he thinks Northwest got exactly what it needed.

"I feel like we did a great job of filling our needs," Wright said.

Northwest finished the 2022 season with a record of 10-3, while No. 5 in the MIAA in points per game and No. 2 in the conference in points allowed. The Bearcats went with a balanced effort in their search for new players. From high school, Northwest signed 14 defensive players and 18 offensive players.

Among the newest players, is a linebacker from just down the street. Maryville senior Cooper Loe has spent the past four years suiting up for Spoofhound football, but the next time he takes the field will be in Bearcat Stadium.

"I think he's going to be a success here at Northwest Missouri State," Wright said. "We're definitely excited about him. He's physical. I like tough kids, and he definitely fits that mold."

The Bearcats' receiving core got bigger, with four wideouts set to join a group of 19 expected returners.

"Come the end of the season because we've got several guys that are going to be graduating and several guys that have been very productive in our receiving core, what we're hopeful is these last two classes will emerge and step through that when these guys graduate," Wright said.

The lone quarterback among the 2023 recruiting class is a senior from Mill Valley High School in Shawnee, Kansas, Hayden Jay. He won four state championships and earned two all-state selections during his time with the Jaguars.

The three transfers are juniors defensive back Austin McKinney from Saddleback College, tight end Tyce Hoover from Hutchinson Community College and tight end Chas Carlgren from Butler Community College. McKinney was selected as his team's defensive MVP for the 2022 season, after recording three interceptions, four pass breakups and 33 combined tackles. Wright said he expects good things to come from his new tight ends.

"They're both big, they're physical, they're nasty, they play on the line-of-scrimmage, but they also have a skill set," Wright said. "Hopefully that blends well with the younger guys we have here on campus."

BAD BLOOD



DAKOTA WEAVER PHOTO EDITOR

Northwest men's basketball guard Isaiah Jackson looks up at the scoreboard during a timeout in the first half against Central Missouri Jan. 19. Jackson has totaled 79 rebounds over the course of the 2022-2023 season.



DAKOTA WEAVER PHOTO EDITOR

Senior guard Diego Bernard drives under the basket and finds junior forward Luke Waters outside of the arc with 2:28 to go in the first half against Central Missouri Jan. 19. Bernard has scored 20 or more points in three of the past four games.

Men's basketball to take on rivals

WESLEY MILLER
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Wins have not been hard to come by for No. 4 Northwest men's basketball in recent years. Over the past three seasons, the Bearcats are a combined 81-9.

During that time, two teams have made winning harder than anyone else for the 'Cats. The Bearcats are one win away from extending their Division II-best streak of 11 straight seasons of 20 or more wins, and, yet, Bearcat Arena's next two guests may make them wait.

Emporia State and Washburn have combined for six of the nine losses Northwest has surrendered in the Bearcats' previous three campaigns. The Hornets, the next foe on Northwest's schedule Feb. 2, gave the Bearcats their first loss of the season Dec. 17. Northwest's second game of the week Feb. 4 will be the team's first look at Washburn this season. "It'll be a challenge — they've had our number," coach Ben McCollum said about Emporia before changing his focus to the Ichabods. "(The Ichabods are) always going to compete and play hard. I would say their record isn't indicative of their team."

Sophomore guard Spencer Schomers hasn't experienced much of Northwest's rivalry between Emporia (17-4, 11-4 MIAA) and Washburn (10-9, 7-6 MIAA). In the middle of his third season with the Bearcats (19-2, 12-2 MIAA), he's appeared in two games against the Hornets and one against the Ichabods in his career. In those three games, he's totaled four minutes of playing time.

SEE RIVALS | A6

Women search for confidence at home

RIVER BOYD
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Northwest women's basketball is coming back to Maryville after a two-game road trip against Nebraska-Kearney Jan. 26 in Kearney, Nebraska, and Fort Hays State Jan. 28 in Hays, Kansas.

Both games ended in heartbreak for the Bearcats as the Lopers earned a 56-55 win over Northwest, and the Tigers won 50-49. The loss to Hays marked the third time in four games the Bearcats lost by 1 point.

Northwest Sophomore guard Caely Kesten scored 15 points and went 5-for-6 (83.3%) from 3-point range against Hays.

"Even though they are 1-point losses, they're against top teams in the conference," Kesten said. "It lets us know we can play with teams like that. It actually gave us confidence going into the next few games as we go against teams closer to us in the standings."

The 'Cats (10-10, 5-9 MIAA) will have their third rematch of the season against Emporia State (11-10,



DAKOTA WEAVER PHOTO EDITOR

Players and fans cheer as Northwest women's basketball sophomore guard Peyton Kelderman drains a corner 3-pointer in the Bearcats' 68-67 loss to Central Missouri Jan. 19. Kelderman finished the contest with a season-high 17 points.

6-9 MIAA). The first contest between the two squads ended in a 64-56 triumph over Northwest Dec. 17 in Emporia, Kansas.

Emporia outscored the Bearcats in every quarter but the final one. The first quarter was the difference for the Hornets as they pulled away with a 16-8 scoring output in

the first 10 minutes of play. The 'Cats were outscored by 4 or fewer points in the second and third quarter, but outscored Emporia 22-19 in the final segment.

"I think our mentality going into it is different," Kesten said.

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