

For Burden, hall gig is all positive

All eyes on ... Zac Burden



Brian O'Shaughnessy/Index

Missouri Hall Director Zac Burden became a student adviser his sophomore year at Truman and a year later was hired as a community coordinator. He said he plans on continuing his work with Residence Life.

BY STEPHANIE HALL
Staff Reporter

Zac Burden turned Residence Life into his real-life occupation.

Missouri Hall Director Zac Burden is in charge of a wide range of things, including administration, services, hall staff and budget. A Kansas City native, he has spent the last nine years in Kirksville.

"One of the things that [the hall directors and I] always joke about is, how do you explain to your parents what exactly your job is?" Burden said. "We have a lot of responsibilities. [These include] serving as an adviser to the Hall Senate, being in charge of crisis management within the building as well as a plethora of other things that just seem to pop up as well."

He said he works very closely with the Student Senate to provide games and cooking equipment. Hall directors also oversee security of the buildings and work to offer programs for students.

"We also spend a great deal of effort providing quality programming in the building for students to attend," Burden said. "We have had some events that are fun, educational, just really providing a lot of opportunities within Missouri Hall for students to interact and for students to further their learning experiences outside of the classroom."

Burden is no stranger to Truman's walls. He first attended in 1999 and graduated with a bachelor's degree in

history and a Masters of Arts in Education. Burden said he lived in Dobson Hall as a freshman and had no interest in becoming a student adviser.

"But during my sophomore year, we got a new director," Burden said. "Her name was Andrea O'Brien, who is our current director. I was at a five-minute meeting with her, and I walked out of that meeting and said to myself, 'I want to work for her in that department.' I picked up my application and was a student adviser."

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Zac Burden
Missouri Hall Director

Burden said he worked at Dobson Hall as an SA for one year and was hired the next year as community coordinator. After one and a half semesters as a community coordinator, he took the position of interim hall director. After that, he was hired as the Missouri Hall director, which he has been for two years.

"I took a one-year leave of absence while Missouri Hall was closed to work on finishing my master's degree," Burden said. "I actually student taught in Novinger, Missouri which is a few miles west of here. I taught Civics and 10th-grade World History to a school that is K-12, about 200 students."

As a hall director, Burden lives in an apartment on the first floor of Missouri Hall.

"It is a warm community, a very welcoming place," Burden said. "There is always something going on. One of my favorite things to do as an HD is to walk around the building and hang posters up every day. ... I stop to watch

a movie here or stop to play a board game there or talk with some students about enrollment and what courses to take. This position affords me the opportunity to continually experience that and help drive that sense of community."

Although some students cannot wait until they can move off campus, Burden said he enjoys being in the center of everything.

"I truly, deeply care about the students in the building and my staff, and so their issues are my issues," Burden said. "Their concerns, their joys, their challenges, those are things that I want to be part of as well. So for me, there is not really a drawback."

Burden said that in what little spare time he has, he enjoys reading cheap mystery novels and playing video games on his Wii. He said he especially enjoys playing Wii bowling with his mom, who he claims is an expert. His main focus, however, is on Missouri Hall and its community.

"Every house has a living room, which is a place where everyone can interact, where you have to pass through when you go on to your room," Burden said. "It is just like growing up in our house. When I was a kid, you always had to pass through the living room to get to your bedroom, so it just has that sense of community, which I think is phenomenal. There is something nontangible within the building which is also very special, which I was also happy to see survive the renovation."

As for his future plans, he said he is happy where he is, but eventually he might find a use for his Master of Arts in Education.

"I am not worried about it as I have some great options and right now I know that I love doing this, and this is where I am supposed to be right now," Burden said.

Search for perfect relationship can cause internal conflict



Lauren Miller
sex and
the 'ville

Dating is difficult. Even when we have given up on the "perfect man" or the "perfect relationship," we still search tirelessly for it. Even when we realize that the Disney concept of love is not out there, we still want a Prince Charming. And even once we decide soul mates do not exist, we hope that each man we meet is just that. At this moment, I am tirelessly searching for the perfect balance between spark and security. I want that spark — the one that makes you excited and nervous, so your stomach does little flip-flops and you want to jump for joy and throw up at the same time. I want that security — the one that makes settling a-OK, and you mentally smile and think, "This is just wonderful."

Both have to exist for any relationship to work. Without a spark, I doubt the relationship would even come to fruition. Without security, no couple would last.

So which one is more important?

My good friend Paul, who is one of those rare male gems who actually reflects on relationships and shares his feelings, needs security. He is traditional. He wants to get married.

I asked him, "What if you meet the perfect girl, but she doesn't want to get married?" "Well, then she isn't the perfect girl."

Not that marriage equates to security, but it is what he wants. It's just so simple, and I love it. He wants to give unconditional love without worrying about trysts or wondering "Is this all there is?" Not to say he does not need the spark, but once he connects with someone — and it feels right, almost comfortable, tried and true — that will be all there is. End of story.

My cousin Sarah, who whole-heartedly believes in love at first sight, needs spark. The only men who interest her are the ones who ignite some passion within her. They challenge her emotionally and mentally. They teach her about rock-climbing, mountain biking, wine, living in India and being a Buddhist.

Every relationship becomes an experience. Not just a learning experience, but a life experience.

They adore her and she

adores them, but once she's done learning, moving and being challenged, she leaves. Every comfort level exists as a barrier. She likes being "that girl," the unobtainable one who will never settle for anything less than the absolute best, which in her eyes is a constant feeling of undying love.

And for me, at this moment, I don't know.

My very first boyfriend was almost all security. Had we continued, we'd be miserable. The Ex-Boy was almost all spark. Had we continued, we'd be miserable.

Both situations are difficult because someone will end up hurt if both don't need the same things. Feeling comfortable is great, but you wonder if there's more to it. Feeling constant passion is great, but you wonder when it's going to end (and it always does).

The current love interest seems to be more security, which, coming off the Ex-Boy, really is more what I need.

But I am not sure if it's what I want. A constant mental battle exists because he is one of those people who is a genuine person. He is himself at all times. He is normal, if not a bit geeky. He is loving, if not a bit overly-so. He is content with life.

I think about him a lot, more as a passing thought with an accompanying smile versus a constant thought with an accompanying twinkle in the eye and sigh of the heart. I cannot wait to spend time with him, but I don't have a burning need

to spend every moment with him. Because passion is not the predominant thought in this relationship, I don't have to worry about when it will die.

He makes me happy, and that should be all that matters.

But is contentedness good enough? I find myself wondering if I should keep looking for someone who does make my heart flutter at any moment, who obviously sticks on my thoughts, who makes me wonder if he loves me like I love him.

Sometimes I wonder if I am really ready to let anyone make me feel like that again. Clearly there was a spark there for me to even pursue him. Something caught my eye.

It probably was that security, that comfort, that safety. Right now, I have some of one and a lot of the other, and it is working pretty well for me. And whether it works long term or not doesn't change the fact that both spark and security make a relationship. Maybe the need for spark and the need for security will break even, or maybe it will be a little of one and lot of the other. Maybe I am totally wrong and a meaningful, lasting relationship can come out of just spark or just security.

But I am rarely wrong. Someone out there will walk that line, providing the constant comfort of unconditional love and the constant exhilaration of undying passion. Someone who, even though I do not believe in soul mates, will make me sit back and say "I found him."



Take precautions to prevent the flu

Influenza, also known as the flu, is caused by the influenza virus, which affects the nose, throat and lungs. The flu is transmitted through tiny aerosol droplets that fly through the air when an infected person talks, sneezes or coughs. Touching unclean surfaces and door handles also can spread the flu.

The flu can cause severe illness and life-threatening complications in some people. Every year in the U.S. more than 200,000 people are hospitalized because of the flu, so protecting yourself and your loved ones is extremely important. Several important steps can be taken to help prevent the virus.

The single best way to prevent the flu is to get a flu vaccination from your physician each year. Two weeks after receiving the vaccination, antibodies develop that protect against the influenza virus.

Because most viruses are spread through direct contact, it is extremely important to wash your hands regularly in warm, soapy water and avoid contact with the face, mouth and eyes. When sneezing, people always should use a clean tissue and discard used ones. If a tissue is not available, you should sneeze away from others.

Using natural methods to help prevent the flu also can be effective.

Drink plenty of fluids: Water flushes out and re-hydrates the body. The average adult should consume nearly 64 ounces of water a day.

Exercise regularly: Doing aerobic exercises increases the blood flow in and out of the heart and increases the body's natural virus-killing cells.

Get fresh air: Central heating in buildings often dries the body out, so getting a regular dose of fresh air is important. Also, during the cold weather people tend to stay indoors where germs circulate.

Eat foods that contain photochemicals: Photochemicals, the natural chemicals in plants, give food a supercharged boost, so eat dark green, yellow and red vegetables and fruits.

Relax: By relaxing 30 minutes a day, the body activates the immune system, causing it to respond to colds and the flu.

Don't smoke: Statistics have proven that heavy smokers are more susceptible to colds and the flu than non-smokers.

For more information on the flu, contact Dr. Duzan at 660-397-2400

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