

*"I think it's another example of what you see a lot of at Truman, which is people giving ... themselves for the benefit of the students, and I think Emily is an outstanding example of that." — Michael Seipel, Agricultural Department Chair*

# All Eyes On: Emily Costello

**Truman alumna becomes part-time teacher and coach of equestrian team**

BY ANNE REBAR  
Staff Reporter

When Emily Costello came to Truman as a freshman, she never imagined it was where she would end up having a career. But after graduating in May 2007, she became a part-time teacher in the agriculture department and the coach of Truman's equestrian team, which, this year, achieved first place in their region for the first time.

Costello will be taking the team on to the zone competition in hopes of winning and moving on to nationals.

"The country is broken up into zones and then further into regions," Costello said. "There are three regions in our zone, and our riders will go on to compete against the winners of the other two regions in our zone."

The team's prospects, Costello said, are uncertain because it's the first time they have competed against St. Mary of the Woods and the University of Minnesota-Crookston.

"This is uncharted territory for us, so you never know what's going to happen," Costello said. "The girls are working very hard. We have extra practices every day and on the weekends, but sometimes people can be super solid at home, but they get to the show and they get a little nervous. Or it can go the other way, where we look a little sloppy at home and we get to the show and we really sharpen up."

Costello makes sure her riders are prepared for the shows by helping them work on their equitation, or riding form, and by ensuring they practice on different types of horses. She said that at shows, often riders literally must draw the name of the horse they are to ride out of a hat, so being prepared for any situation is important.

"You never know what you are going to pull out, if you're going to get something big and lazy or maybe a horse that's a little more sensitive," Costello said. "We also try and do some things that are fun, too, like playing games or just going outside the arena on a walk. We like riding horses, we really do, and sometimes we can forget that when trying to prepare for a competition, but if you don't like what you're doing there's no purpose in doing it."

Since Costello became coach, she said that her goals have been to improve the riders individually and to build team cohesion. She said she thinks it has gone really well, a lot of which she attributes to the kids on the team. Focusing more on the recruitment of riders helps as well. Costello said meeting prospective students, as well as taking the school's horses out to the shows, helps get the word out about Truman's equestrian program.

"It's not every parent's dream to have their kid be a horseback rider, because, at best, it's a risky investment," Costello said. "But if they can send them to a place like Truman, which has such a good reputation and they can major in something else while doing their equine stuff on the side, then it's a lot more attractive. I don't think a lot of people realize that we have that, and I think it's starting to change a little bit, but it's a slow evolution."

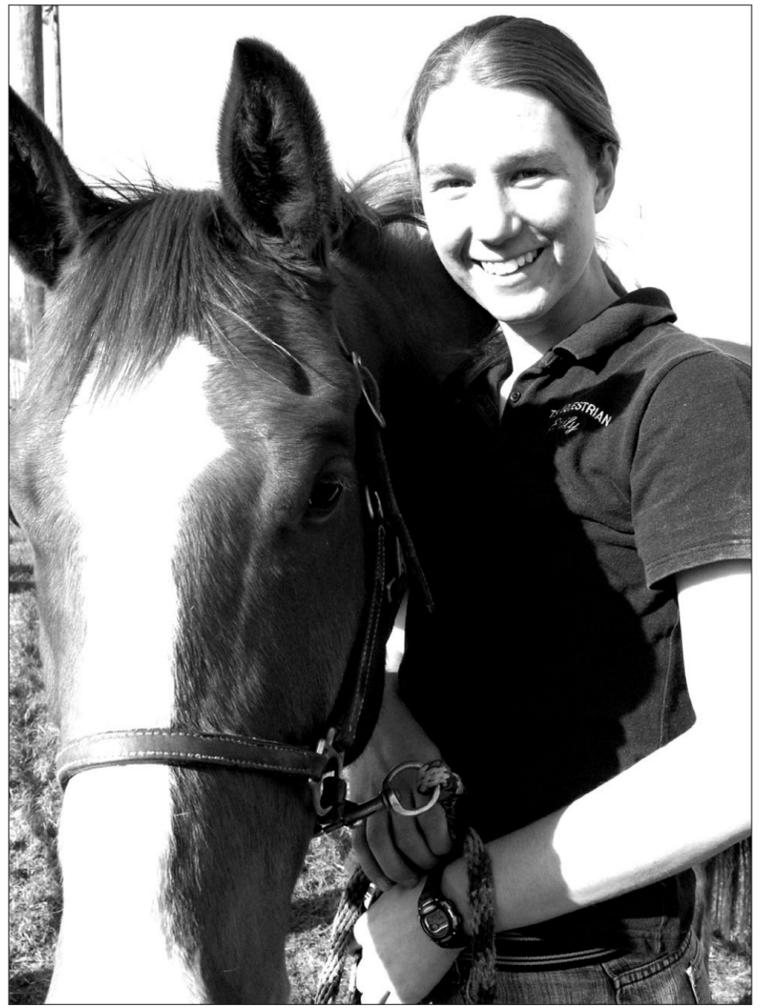
Costello started riding in elementary school when her father, who worked for a group that did therapeutic riding, took her to the farm for pony rides. In fourth grade, Costello said she decided she didn't like playing soccer or softball, so her parents decided to give her riding lessons, and in sixth grade, she got her first pony, Polly. In high school, Costello's parents gave her the option of getting a car or a horse, and she said she chose to get her horse, Daiquiri.

"My friends in high school used to make fun of me, saying I should get a T-shirt that said 'I asked my dad for a pony, and he said yes — twice,'" Costello said.

Costello brought her two horses with her to Truman as a freshman. She majored in biology and joined the Horseman's Association, but she didn't join the equestrian team until her sophomore year. She found out her senior year that the equestrian coach was leaving, and the old coach encouraged her to apply for the job.

Along with coaching the equestrian team, Costello also teaches horsemanship classes and horse-training techniques as a part of the agricultural science department. She said the most rewarding part of teaching is watching both her students and the horses improve.

"My horse training class is the perfect example because I'm teaching students how to teach horses how to do things," Costello said. "It's really nice when both the students and horses progress together, and you get to see them happy and excited about their horse finally standing still when they get on it or finally learning how to trot. I think most teachers feel that way. They like seeing improvement based



Krista Goodman/Index  
Alumna Emily Costello is the coach of Truman's equestrian team and has her sights on taking the team to nationals. She loves riding her horse Houston.

on their efforts."

Agricultural Department Chair Michael Seipel said Costello is a huge asset to Truman. He said that besides being at equestrian team practice every day, she puts in countless hours at the farm and really goes above and beyond what she's paid for.

"I think it's another example of what you see a lot of at Truman, which is people giving ... themselves for the benefit of the students, and I think Emily is an outstanding example of that," Seipel said.

He added that Costello also is helping out with a proposal for a therapeutic riding program to be implemented on Truman's campus.

Senior Joanna Russell is on the equestrian team and has known Costello since her fresh-

man year, when Costello was still a fellow student and team member. Russell said that Costello is completely devoted to the equestrian team, giving weekly private lessons to those who need help.

"She really gets the fact that we are in school, too," Russell said. "You have to go to a certain amount of shows, and the few weeks before you have to practice, but if you have a test or something you can set up a different time to practice. Since she was a biology major she really knows what, academically, it takes to be at Truman."

Costello says she is not sure what her future might hold, but she is sure about one thing: She will stay at Truman as long as she's happy.

## Christian groups ask campus to forgive

BY BETHANY COURY  
Staff Reporter

Rumors of a campus-wide prank and possible illegal activities were sparked March 15, as students wondered what Chi Alpha was and why it had chalked "Will you forgive us?" all over the campus sidewalks, apparently serving as a preamble to Greek Week. Chi Alpha, a non-Greek Christian student organization, was just the advertised sponsor of what has become known as the "Forgive Me" event with five other affiliated Christian organizations and an unofficial student group spearheading it: the Christian Leadership Council.

"Forgive Me," which took place at 7 p.m. March 25 in the SUB Activities Room, was the CLC's solution to what they considered a severe problem at Truman — the misrepresentation of their religion, based on the shortcomings of its followers. Senior Joey Kalan, a leader in Campus Crusade for Christ and a member of the CLC, said that although the chalking was an advertisement for this event, it was not

some sort of trick to draw people in to the actual event, but rather a sincere apology, both as individuals and as a collective group.

"We wanted to actually say 'Sorry,'" Kalan said. "Because we really are sorry for the fact that, even in our own organizations, people come — they want to find out stuff and they're not necessarily welcomed at the door — and they're turned away by it. And we feel like we're just misrepresenting who Jesus is."

Advertisements, which at first only included the chalking and several posters, simply said "Will you forgive us? — Chi Alpha" with no additional information. Then, March 24, students involved in the event wore purple T-shirts which read, "Will you forgive me?" Kalan said they did this to encourage personal, one-on-one conversations, expecting the chalking to inspire curiosity, and hoping that people would ask questions when they saw students wearing these shirts.

Kalan said they got the concept from the book "Blue Like Jazz" by Donald Miller.

"In that book, they set up a shack on campus where it said 'Confessions' on the top of it," Kalan said. "And it was a place where students could come in and confess but when they got in there, it flipped on them and the people inside confessed to [the students]. ... We wanted to get more people involved than the three people that could sit inside [a shack], and so we decided to do the same concept, but with the T-shirts to reach different populations."

Sophomore Elizabeth Pulley, a member of CRU and the supervisor of chalking for this event, said the intent was to acknowledge that the Christians on campus have wronged the entire campus, as well as people individually, often by judging them or not loving them unconditionally.

Pulley said they are apologizing for sometimes forgetting to unconditionally love anyone and everyone regardless of who they are or where they've been.

Such misrepresentations prompted the CLC to try to apologize to the campus, insisting all the while that

the apology be personal. Pulley said the chalking and the T-shirts led to many conversations, usually initiated by the question, "What have you done," and concluded with invitation to their final event. "Forgive Me" opened with Senior Kyle Oesch on the guitar, drawing everyone's attention with The Beatles' "Here Comes the Sun" and then one of his own songs, followed by a testimony from junior Andrew Cotton. Another speaker talked about the Biblical importance of forgiveness, and there was a 15 minute intermission before an inter-organizational band began to play worship music. Although the original goal was to focus on students who were not affiliated with any Christian organizations, few showed up.

Cotton, leader of both Chi Alpha and the CLC, said the event wasn't what they intended — to be more seeker-friendly — but that he felt positively about it, saying it's always a learning experience. Cotton said one aspect he was particularly pleased with were the week's conversations. He recalled the first conversation

instigated by his "Forgive Me" shirt, which was with a Hindu student. Cotton said that although he was shy at first, the student was eager to hear more, which surprised and excited him.

"We can at least talk about it," Cotton said. "And I can come to a better understanding of what she believes [and] where she's coming from and clarify some things that I believe."

Cotton said that many people are disenchanted with organized religion and have had bad experiences with Christians somewhere along the line, so he said their intent was to work on their public relations by creating positive experiences to outweigh the bad.

"The few people that I had a chance to interact with, it was just a good chance to kind of humbly approach them with my beliefs," Cotton said. "And it started up some good conversations and I think it stoked some deeper relationships and I think that's good, regardless whether they become Christians or not, just building friendships and understanding."

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