

All Eyes On: Tim Barcus



Brian O'Shaughnessy/Index

Campus photographer Tim Barcus shows a photo to Emily Haupt, coordinator for student life and development for Residence Life, whom he was photographing Tuesday afternoon in his studio.

Photographer makes career of capturing campus smiles

BY BLAISE HART-SCHMIDT
Features Editor

All across campus, photographer Tim Barcus can be seen behind his camera lens, holding a light reflector and clicking the shutter button. For the last 15 years, Barcus has worked as the campus photographer, taking photos of everything from quarterbacks scoring touchdowns to students reading on the Quad.

Barcus said he was interested in photography from a young age. He joined the yearbook staff in high school and graduated with a photography from Northeast Missouri State University in 1989. He then worked at the Moberly Monitor Index for five years as a photojournalist. In 1995, he became Truman's campus photographer.

Throughout the years, his job has changed drastically, he said. In the beginning, he did most of his photography on film.

"Back then my job was very labor intensive in the darkroom — developing film, developing pictures," he said. "Everything was on paper, everything was a product that you hold in your hand."

Truman's transition from film to digital came later than other institutions because of the cost and quality of equipment, he said. Barcus said he also witnessed Truman's entrance into the world of the Internet.

"When I first started working here, there was no web," he said. "I remember those conversations, 'You think we ought to get a website?' Those were the conversations we had in the late '90s. And now it dominates pretty much everything."

Whether he's using film or digital, Barcus said one of the things he enjoys most about photography is the act of recording history. Years from now, he said, students will look back at the photos he's taken to remember their college experiences. But recording history isn't all fun and games.

In 1993, while working for the Moberly newspaper, Barcus accompanied a reporter to Sumner, Mo., to photograph the effects of a flood.

"There was a miscommunication, and people thought we were coming to bring help, they thought we were coming with stuff," he said. "Once they realized we were just journalists, it was upsetting to a lot of them. I remember one lady just stood up and left crying because she was in such a rough situation. But you know, if not for the people to tell the story, they weren't going to get help."

Every day of his job is different, Barcus said. As campus photographer, Barcus is in charge of taking

photos for every office on campus, meaning he often takes photos of sporting events, organizations, students, classrooms and faculty members. He also manages the rotating slideshow on the Truman homepage. Because he's constantly taking photos, Barcus said he has a lot of interaction with students.

"There's an excitement and an energy that the students just bring with them all the time," he said. "I really enjoy working with the students. And there's so many unique things that the students do."

During the summer, Barcus began making videos for the department homepages. Communications coordinator Travis Miles helps edit the videos and said Barcus has a good eye for the visuals.

"The biggest thing working with Tim is he always has a positive attitude," Miles said. "He's good at pushing you a little bit more and getting ... the best."

Heidi Templeton, director of public relations, hired Barcus 15 years ago and said the love he has for Truman and photography was apparent in the interview.

"He does tremendous work," she said. "His love for the University really shows through his work."

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Tim Barcus
campus photographer

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Faculty addresses homophobia

On-campus programs address bullying and homosexuality

BY KELLY KIESEL
Staff Reporter

A highly controversial issue, frowned upon by some and accepted by others, has leapt onto the radar screen again. Homosexuality and the string of recent suicides by homosexuals drew national attention because they were driven by extreme bullying and insensitivity.

Freshman Travis Koons came out four months ago after having a girlfriend for four years. He said the recent suicides really got him thinking. He said it puts the spotlight on an issue that needs to be discussed more openly and addressed in America.

Koons said he came to Truman from a public high school, where

homosexuality was not really talked about. He said coming to college brought more acceptance as well as the additional resource of organizations supportive of gays, such as Prism.

Koons also is in Lambda Chi Alpha, a social fraternity, and said his brothers accept and support him.

"Kindness and understanding is always the answer, and you cannot get enough of that," he said.

Jane Maxwell, University counselor and member of the Women and Gender Studies committee, said the suicides are frightening and tragic because they underscore the fact that so many people are not accepting of others with a different orientation.

Maxwell said the use of technology has highly influenced current bullying.

"Where is the moral code?" she said. "It is hard to know how to

handle everything with the infinite possibilities of technology such as Skype and Facebook."

Maxwell said the suicides are a reminder to beware of bullying in any form and to give acceptance, tolerance and diversity the ongoing attention they deserve.

"We need to increase tolerance and keep going without assuming that things will just be alright," she said.

Maxwell said Truman students are more welcoming and respect differences on campus. She said there is always someone to turn to who is open and aware of

the issues.

"I see the student population through a different lens as a counselor," Maxwell said. "Many people that come in [to UCS] were already experiencing bullying before they got here."

She said college gives some students the opportunity to reinvent themselves because the spotlight is not on them anymore.

Maxwell said there are several University programs that focus on making

homosexuals feel accepted and providing information and help for students on campus. One

such program is Safe-Zone, which teaches faculty and staff how to create an accepting community for LGBTQ students to live.

University counselor Joe Hamilton has coordinated the program for five years. He said it helps create a feeling of unconditional support and acceptance for students feeling threatened or insecure for any reason.

Hamilton said another program at the University is Question Persuade Refer, a national suicide prevention program. QPR teaches students the skills to save a life, Hamilton said. It was held Oct. 20, as part of Mental Health Awareness Week.

"After working with LGBTQ students as a counselor for 18 years, I know the kind of pain and struggles those students go through," Hamilton said. "Anything I or others can do to prevent bullying of any kind is important work."

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Jane Maxwell
University counselor, member of Women and Gender Studies committee

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