



Andrea Hewitt/Index

Junior Rolland Wimberley rarely travels back to his hometown of Wrangell, Alaska. Wimberley visits friends' homes or stays in Kirksville during most breaks except for Winter and Summer breaks.

Students come from far, far away

BY EMILY BATTMER
Staff Reporter

While many Truman State students recently arrived back to campus after a weeklong Thanksgiving Break at home, some students stayed on campus because home means more than just a few hours' drive. For junior Rolland Wimberley, home is an overnight flight away.

Wimberley moved 6,000 miles from his hometown of Wrangell, Alaska, to attend Truman.

Coming to Truman has presented him new opportunities. With so many Truman students hailing from the metropolitan areas of Saint Louis and Kansas City, students don't often see Kirksville as a city full of "more options than back home." But Wrangell is an island 1/10th the size of Kirksville, where there are no fast food restaurants, no movie theaters and the nearest Wal-Mart is a six-hour ferry ride away.

Wimberley, who is on the wrestling team, heard about the college from his high school superintendent, who also attended Truman. Wimberley said he liked the idea of leaving his small town of about 1,600 people and attending a school where none of the other 27 members of his graduating class would be going. He said that after attending kindergarten through 12th grade with the same small group of people, he was ready for a change.

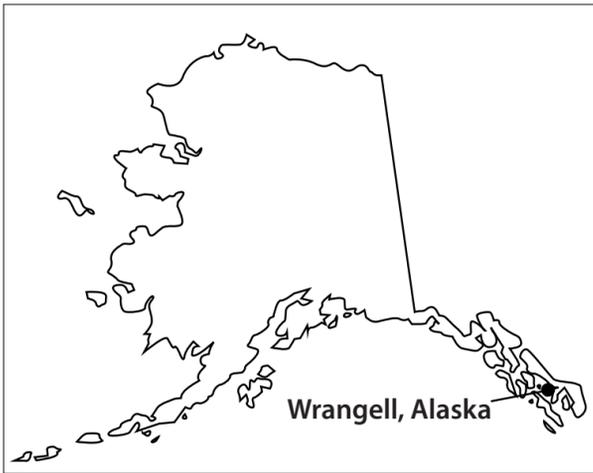
"A lot of people grow up together and go off to college in packs," he said. "I kind of wanted to go somewhere and hit the reset button."

Wimberley's independence and his love for travel were other major factors influencing his decision to move away from Alaska, he said. That desire to see new places and experience new things has prompted him to visit most of the United States and Canada, and he said he plans to study abroad in Ireland next semester.

Wimberley said he plans to go to law school, although he's not sure where — but, geography doesn't play a huge role in his decision making process.

"I don't get tied down to places," Wimberley said. "It's more the people I'm with than where I'm at."

Going to school in Missouri has allowed him to take advantage of his independent personality and to branch out in different directions and meet new people, he said. He was quieter in high school, but since coming to Truman, he said he can be more outgoing and find a group to which he belongs.



"[In Wrangell,] you know everyone — their first and last names, life stories, small town drama, that type of stuff," he said. "When you grow up in a small town, everyone expects certain things from you. You get locked into whoever your persona is."

"What makes Wrangell different is the isolation and not having the freedom to just jump in your car and drive to Columbia [Mo.] for a shopping spree or to hang out in the city for the weekend," he said. "It's all on the ferry or plane schedules."

That isolation not only limits hangout spots, but also affects the town as a whole. Wimberley said grocery stores in Wrangell don't always carry everything Kirksville does.

"Food is shipped up on a barge once a week, and if the town runs out of milk or steak or apples then they are out for the rest of the week until freight day," he said.

His town's remoteness limits his ability to go home, Wimberley said, because it's a long, expensive trip. His plane makes an overnight stop in Seattle and plane tickets run about \$800 to \$1,000 dollars each. He only goes home twice a year, for Christmas and summer, he said. When most students are driving back home for long weekends and Thanksgiving Break, he stays in Kirksville or visits his friends' hometowns.

Wimberley isn't the only student who deals with being far away from home. Senior Jordan Powell to Truman after his freshman year at Northern Arizona University, and his family lives 1,400 miles away in Mesa, Ariz.

Like Wimberley, Powell generally goes home only twice a year: summer and Winter Break. This year he was fortunate enough to go home for Thanksgiving for the first time in three years, he said.

He said in addition to being more independent, out-of-state students have to think differently about other things — like packing. While other students can pack up their cars when they drive home and back, Powell said he can only take a small amount of luggage on his 27-hour train ride home.

"I have to be efficient with what I take," he said. "There are some things — like a TV, extra shoes or extra books — that I have to leave behind."

Despite the infrequency of their visits home, Powell and Wimberley both said they don't become too homesick. Wimberley said he always enjoys making new friends, and has found people to keep him company through the wrestling team, his fraternity, and the people with which he lives.

Additionally, he said he has made friends who live in Kirksville, who he spends time with when everyone else travels home.

One of those friends is junior Colton Schmitz, who is on the wrestling team with Wimberley and was born and raised in Kirksville.

"Rolland has to rely on himself for everything here, whereas I can go home when I need to," Schmitz said. "He's a pretty independent guy."

Wimberley said he is happy at Truman, but there is one thing he misses about home: the people. He said he misses the quiet nights he would spend with his friends, gathered around a bonfire by the ocean. He said he misses the peace and quiet of his hometown.

"Here, everyone talks about how it's so boring, but there's always something going on," he said. "You're always rushing to do one thing or another."

He said Wrangell is nice and quiet, but he doesn't know yet whether he'll move back.

Glover to visit campus

BY SCOTT HENSON
Staff Reporter

When junior Michael Delcau and senior Manu Srinivasan created the Facebook event "Bring Donald Glover to Truman State" in March, neither expected such rapid success, but this Saturday, the pair will witness the payoff of their social media scheme.

Donald Glover, the comedian who plays Troy on the NBC show "Community" and raps as the stage name "Childish Gambino," will perform standup at 7 p.m. Saturday in the Baldwin Auditorium. His appearance at Truman is thanks, in large part, to the two Glover fans who put a finger to the pulse of student interest for the comedian through Facebook.

Delcau's interest in Glover's comedy began when he saw videos produced by the comedian's early sketch group, Derrick Comedy, during the summer of 2007. From there, he watched videos of Glover performing standup, following his career to his current role on "Community."

"He's just a very versatile person," Delcau said. "He's an entertainer, comedian, rapper. It seems like he doesn't really stop at anything."

When they discovered last March that Glover was available at a reasonable price, Delcau and Srinivasan, a friend and fellow Glover fan, decided to create the "Bring Donald Glover to Truman State" event page, dedicated to gauging interest for the comedian at Truman.

"At that point in time, he didn't blow up just yet, and his prices were still low, so we just wanted to see how many people were actually interested," Srinivasan said. "We didn't think it would be that many."

By the night after the event's creation, Delcau said he was surprised to find more than 100 people already listed as "attending." Some of them, he said, were St. Louis and Kansas City residents, who expressed an eagerness to drive to Kirksville just to see the event.

"I don't know how else we would have reached them if we didn't use Facebook or some other social media platform to get to [out-of-town audiences]," Srinivasan said. "It wouldn't have happened otherwise."

A few days after the event's

creation, Delcau and Srinivasan were contacted via Facebook message by Alec Sydlow, chair of SAB's special events committee, who said the SAB would be interested in bringing Glover to Truman during the fall semester.

From there, Delcau and Srinivasan had to further prove student interest by using an online petition. Andrew Korte, chair of SAB's films and comedians committee, said SAB is required to consider organizing any event for which 5 percent of the student body petitions. For Delcau and Srinivasan, this meant 350 signatures on an online petition they posted to their Facebook event page.

Because the Facebook event had reached 500 to 600 attendees in a matter of weeks, Delcau said the required number of petitioners for the separate petition was not difficult to reach.

When 350 digital signatures were gathered, Glover's name went onto the survey for Truman's fall comedian in April. Korte said he won by a narrow margin against Jason Sudeikis, a Saturday Night Live cast member. Korte said he thinks Glover's success on the survey

primarily is because of his youth and ability to relate to Truman students.

"He

plays a college student on TV, and he's just kind of got this energetic personality that seems to lend itself well to this campus," Korte said.

Korte said that during his 2 1/2 years as an SAB member, he never before had seen students petition for a comedian using Facebook, and for those seeking to bring an entertainer to Truman, using a Facebook group as a direct form of petition is something he thinks is worth considering.

"In my opinion, [a Facebook event] serves as enough to be a petition because if you say that you would attend the event, then that's equal if not more important than signing your name on a piece of paper," Korte said.

Srinivasan and Delcau's "Bring Donald Glover to Truman" event page now has more than 653 attendees — a number Delcau said he never envisioned seeing on the event's sidebar. He said it still makes him and Srinivasan feel a little taken aback at their success.

"I'm surprised," Delcau said. "I didn't think it would go that far, or go at all."

Donald Glover Performance
7 p.m., Dec. 3
Baldwin Auditorium
Student Admission: Free
General Admission: \$5

The dirt about Donald Glover

-Born in Edwards Air Force Base, Calif.

-While studying at New York University, he began Derrick Comedy, a sketch comedy group that produced videos like "Keyboard Kid" and "National Spelling Bee."

-Raps under the stage name "Childish Gambino."

-Graduated from NYU with a degree in Dramatic Writing

- Wrote for the NBC comedy "30 Rock"

- Plays former high school football star, Troy Barnes in NBC comedy "Community"

According to imdb.com, nbc.com and derrickcomedy.com

High schools' reputations shouldn't matter



BY ASHLEY JOST
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There is a question I dread when I meet other students for the first time: "Where did

you go to high school?"

For whatever reason, this question only comes up in conversation with other St. Louisans. Yet this odd obsession comes up all the time. I've had random people ask me at parties, at work and even during interviews.

Let me preface this by saying I'm proud of my hometown. Really, I am. What's not to love about the Cardinals, toasted ravioli and provel cheese? But, what exactly is the obsession with needing to know where everyone spent his or her previous four years of education?

I have a theory. Not only are people proud of their high school — much as I am of St. Louis Bread Company, not Panera — but there's also a stereotype or stigma attached to each school that people use to judge about whom they're talking to.

Unfortunately, I've learned the stigma for my alma mater isn't that positive.

"Oh, you're from St. Louis? What high school did you go to?"

"I went to Hazelwood West in North County."

"Oh."

People always say it sympathetically. Sure, we made national headlines for a bomb threat a few years ago and aren't seen too highly for our door alarms and drug-sniffing dogs, but our football team, award winning theater program and almost-full staff of Truman alumni certainly are nothing to shake a stick at.

Public schools in North County aren't the only schools that have bad reputations. Stereotypes of private schools, both girls' and guys', are equally obnoxious.

Whether it be that everyone from a particular all-boys school are known for being athletic jerks, or a separate all-girls school being known as snooty, no one escapes the St. Louis high school judgment.

In reality, these are stigmas that stem only from random high school gossip, there's also judgment of status, both social and monetary. I find it unfortunate. Most schools have people from rich, poor and middle class backgrounds, along with people from every label society has manifested from the entertainment world.

Judgers and judges, from St. Louis and from the rest of the state, country and world, be aware that it doesn't matter where you spent your four formative years in high school, but rather how those four years helped form the person you are today.