

# Truman looks to boost enrollment

BY DAN ROMINE  
Staff Reporter

Truman State is coming off of a 14-year enrollment high, but concerns across the state about college enrollment has the office of admissions pursuing an aggressive enrollment plan.

Regina Morin, Associate Vice President of enrollment management said the University is attempting to stay ahead of other public universities by implementing an aggressive new recruitment plan using targeted admission counselors to recruit for Fall 2013.

The average number of incoming freshmen for the last five years has been about 1,360, and this year it fell to about 1,275, Morin said. She said the reasons for this decline in enrollment are twofold: demographic trends and the suffering economy.

The total number of high school graduates throughout the Midwest began to decrease during 2005 — a decrease that is expected to continue for at least a decade and might not be back to average numbers until after 2020, according to a study by the Western Interstate Commission for Higher Education.

"We have known since 2008 that we were going to be faced — all of us in the Midwest — were faced with those decreasing high school graduate numbers," Morin said.

Morin said the decline in numbers is caused by a large movement of the population to the southeast and southwest regions of the United States.

"Immigration — legal and otherwise — and differences in birth rates among racial/ethnic groups have contributed to demographic shifts that are radically transforming the face of public schools," according to the WICHE study.

"We're dealing with just a per-

centage of those high school graduates and so the shrinking number is hitting us harder than many of the competition," Morin said. "Probably the hardest, as far as any of public schools in the state are concerned."

Money is the other cause of the enrollment decline, Morin said. Students are looking for ways to save during this bad economy, she said, including commuting from home or attending a community college.

Truman's new strategy to increase enrollment considers which of the University's efforts currently are producing results and works to increase those efforts. A major part of this new program is a focus on transfer students. The number of transfer students has nearly doubled during the past few years, from 122 during 2005 to 210 during 2011, said Jeremy Brinning, transfer programs admission counselor.

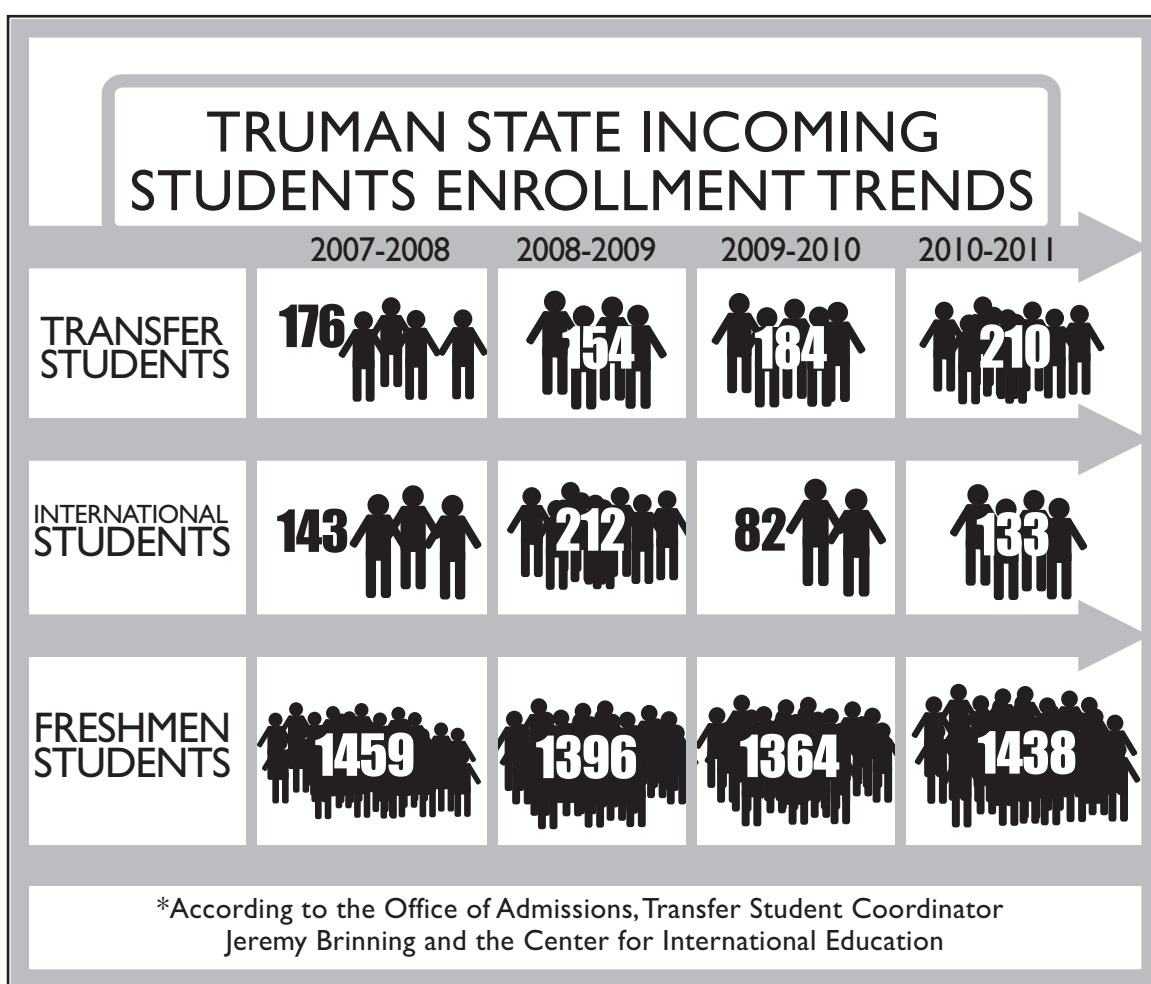
In an effort to continue increasing these numbers, another admission counselor, Jennifer Zweifel, has been assigned to work specifically with transfer students.

"We are a well-regarded institution, and students are interested in the quality of education, the opportunities that they have and the value of what a Truman education is," Brinning said about why transfer students pick Truman.

Truman has been ranked as the top public university across the Midwest for the past 16 years, according to US News & World Report.

International students also could play a role to offset future drops in enrollment — their numbers have nearly doubled during the past few years, from 200 during 2006 to 364 during 2012, according to the International Student Affairs Office.

Truman currently is restructuring the areas for which incoming freshmen admission counselors are responsible so they are able to use



their time more efficiently, Morin said. She also said Truman is concentrating on interstate strategies, as well. Illinois, for example, is one of the few states in the region in which the number of high school graduates is expected to increase. Because of this increase, Truman plans to host at least five events in large cities such as Chicago to recruit new students, she said.

The final area of focus for the implementation of this new plan will be campus visits. Morin said Truman looked at what happens

on campus visits and provided additional training to student ambassadors to make sure visitors are impressed when they leave.

Nicole Boyer, a senior Student Ambassador, said every student is different and is trying to find a university that fits their needs. Once an Ambassador finds what the student wants, it's very easy to show them those aspects of Truman that they're looking for — to show them how easy it is to fit in, she said.

"Our yield on the people who

come and visit campus is incredibly high," Morin said.

In addition to personal tours, Truman also has an online virtual tour that will be updated soon. Personal and online tours are both effective, Morin said.

She said it's too soon to tell whether these efforts will be enough to overcome the expected drops in enrollment throughout the state for the 2013-2014 academic year, but she said she feels confident that an increase in enrollment at Truman is possible.

## MACC enrollment remains stable

Local community college maintains high enrollment despite decreasing trends

BY JACCI GUTHRIE  
Staff Reporter

With community colleges across the state facing decreased enrollment rates this fall, Moberly Area Community College is one of the few schools maintaining stable enrollment, Paul Wagner, Missouri Department of Higher Education deputy commissioner said.

Moberly Area Community College has seven locations, including one in Kirksville, and provides online classes.

Jaime Morgans, Public Relations and Marketing director, said the college's enrollment rate did not significantly increase or decrease for the 2012-2013 academic year.

At last headcount, MACC had 5,844 students enrolled in classes as of this week, which is 99 more students than last year, or a 1.7 percent increase, Morgans said.

"Compared to other colleges, we're doing better because we haven't seen a decrease," Morgans said.

Despite overall stability, the Kirksville campus enrollment numbers decreased from 405 enrolled students last year to 329 students this year, she said.

Morgans said MACC experienced a five year trend of increased enrollment leading up to this year.

During that five year period, the Columbia location grew 111 percent and online classes increased 498 percent, according to the MACC website.

The increases during the past five years, and MACC's ability to maintain stable numbers this year, can be attributed to two main factors, Morgans said.

One factor, she said, parents encouraging traditional students to stay home and use the A+ Scholarship Program to attend community college.



Submitted Photo

The Kirksville branch of MACC showed a slight decrease in enrollment numbers during a count last week. The college had a general increase of 1.7 percent.

"I went to community college because of the A+ scholarship program, but I was still able to participate in ROTC at Truman [State]," said Zak Tucker, Moberly Area Community College sophomore and Truman ROTC member. "It was more convenient to stay in town and I got two years free."

Morgans said the other factor is non-traditional students returning to college to gain marketable skills after losing jobs during the bad economy.

She said these nontraditional students tend to enroll in community colleges to obtain an inexpensive and quick degree.

Paul Wagner, Missouri Department of Higher Education deputy commissioner, said despite enrollment numbers growing rapidly across the state for five years, the state as a whole is experiencing a 1.5 percent decrease in

community college enrollment.

St. Louis area schools such as St. Charles Community College and Jefferson College are experiencing this decreasing trend the most, Wagner said.

However, he said Missouri's southwest region and the Moberly area are showing slight increases in their enrollment numbers.

Wagner said he attributes the decrease in some community colleges' enrollment to a variety of factors. He said the gradual improvement in the economy allows a greater number of students to attend four-year universities. He also said smaller high school graduating classes are a significant factor.

Whatever the reason, the impact is a reminder of the recent changes in Missouri's education trends and economy, Wagner said.

## Convenience store comes to Kirksville

BY ROSE MCCRAY  
Staff Reporter

Express Mart 6, a new convenience store on the corner of Jefferson and Baltimore streets, is scheduled to open Oct. 1.

Owner Jignesh Patel said the store will offer varieties of beer, wine, packaged liquor, cigarettes, cigars and liquor accessories. In addition, he said his store will offer fountain drinks, coffee, snacks and gum.

Patel said the store will offer competitive prices and a variety of merchandise. He said the business will emphasize quick and friendly service, and he is looking forward to having students and community members as loyal customers.

Patel said he owns other convenience stores across central and eastern Missouri, including some in Moberly, Fulton, Mexico and Troy. He said he decided to open a store in Kirksville because he saw an opportunity in the job market for a successful business.

"It looked like there was a need for another store," Patel said.

Troy Smith, manager at Westport, a liquor store in town, said Express Mart 6 will bring more competition for his store and others, such as Casey's, that sell similar items.

Smith said despite the competition, he is glad the store has come to Kirksville and he thinks it will improve the appearance of Highway 63, as well as be something to talk about.

"It will look a lot better than the old rundown gas station," he said about the former building that stood where the new Express Mart is. "It will make [Highway] 63 have one less eyesore."

He said he wishes Patel all the best in establishing the new business.

Junior Valerie Weinhaus said she thinks the 2009 closing of Party Mart on Jefferson Street might be an indication of how the new store will do.

"I think he's [going to] have a hard time," said Weinhaus. "It's [going to] take a lot to beat Hy-vee."

Despite this, she said she probably will shop there if the prices are cheaper than other stores.



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