

# Program promotes diversity at Truman

BY NATALIE CARBERY  
Staff Reporter

According to Kiplinger Magazine, Truman State is ranked 19th on a list of the best buy public colleges in America with an average debt of \$20,777 for the graduating class of 2013. Now, Truman is working to spread its reputation across the United States and abroad by funding college finance programs and increasing diversity in the student population.

During the past three years, Truman has been funding programs not only to expand the school's popularity but also to inform about college finances through a program called "Financial Fit," said Jill Graves, Associate Director of Recruitment.

This program has been made possible by a partnership with a Chicago-based guidance counselor, Frank Palmasani, who developed the program. "Financial Fit" is a web program that helps students to filter colleges by price and distance, use a net price calculator and get advice on filling out financial aid documents.

Palmasani brought his program to District 155 during October in the northwestern suburbs of Chicago. District 155 consists of four major high schools that educate thousands of students each year of varying backgrounds and socioeconomic statuses.

According to a publication on

the District 155 website, Truman's sponsorship allowed thousands of families within the district free access to Palmasani's program. Because of Truman's funding of the "Financial Fit" program, many U.S. and international families have the opportunity to explore college finances that are more appropriate for their budget.

"Sponsorship in this way is not unusual," Graves said. "This sort of program meets multiple objectives such as spreading Truman's reputation of quality and value while promoting early college awareness. 'Chicagoland' is a pool of students we really want to tap."

With the shrinking population of middle class demographics in the United States, Truman's out-of-state population has dropped, especially in Midwest states like Iowa, Graves said. She said pulling students to Truman from large cities and abroad will offer cultural, ethnic and geographical diversity.

"By reaching out to other demographics, Truman can assist in 'social uplift of the culture ... for both [Truman] students as well as the population in general,'" Graves said.

The true goal of reaching out to other demographics is a "mind-share" or a way of spreading Truman's name and reputation across the country, Graves said.

Truman's reputation of high value for less money has reached around the world,

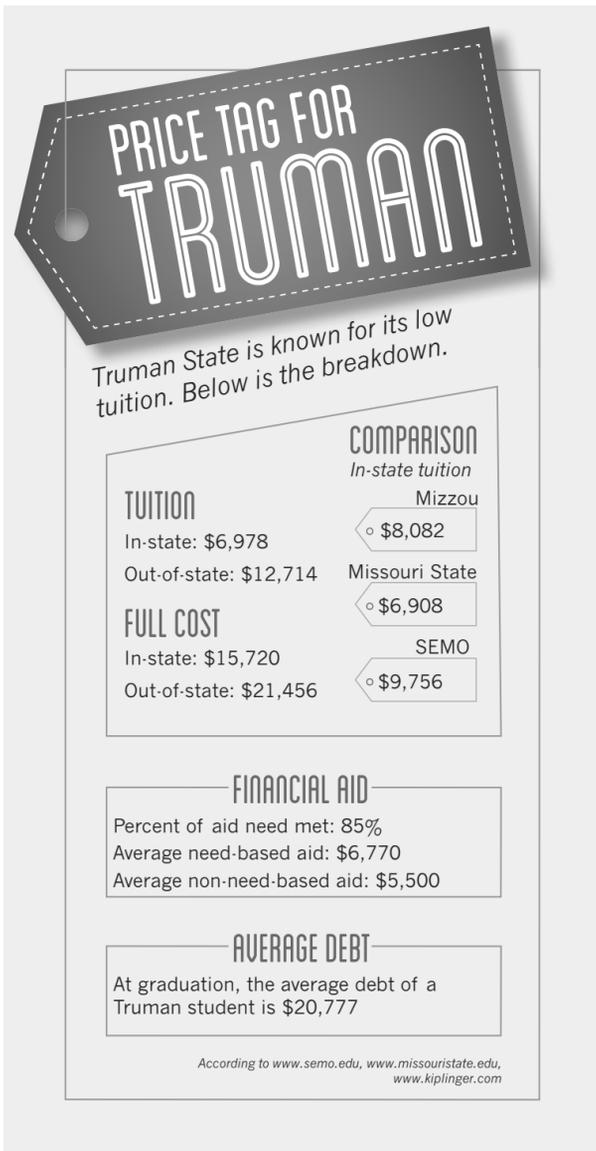
bringing many international students to a primarily Caucasian population in Kirksville. On campus, this diversity has manifested in clubs celebrating Sri Lankan, African, Vietnamese and other cultures. Freshman Estelle Hiard said diversity has drawn many of these students to Truman, something their own schools cannot offer.

Hiard is an international student from Mont-Dol, France. At her law school at the Université de Rennes, diversity almost is nonexistent. She said most of the students belong to the same demographic — Caucasian Christians of the upper middle class.

Truman's diversity had a large appeal — allowing her to enjoy Midwestern culture and interact with other international students, Hiard said.

Although Truman was more diverse than Hiard expected, she said she sees a need for geographical diversity on campus.

"I think it would be beneficial for them, actually," Hiard said of Missouri-born Truman students. "[Students from Missouri] keep spending time with people from the same high school — especially when they went to school in St. Louis or Kansas City. College is about meeting new people. Diversity brings more culture and knowledge. It makes you think about all that you have learned."



## Students get hands-on experience with archives

BY KRISTEN WOMBLE  
Features Reporter

Inside room 208 of the General Services building, where piles of papers cover the tables and counters, Truman State students are getting a glimpse into the past.

As part of the Judicial Archives Project, Truman students are receiving academic credit to go through 19th century court case files from various counties around Missouri. They work with state archivist Mary McIntosh, to process, interpret and preserve them for future use.

"This has been a win-win program for practically everyone involved — my program, Truman, and the county officials because they get a secure copy of their records," McIntosh said.

Truman was the first university to partner with the Missouri government for this project, but this program now is in the process of being duplicated around the state with the Truman program being used as a model.

History professor Jeff Gall, coordinator of the program and the academic supervisor of the interns, said the state approached Truman about establishing the partnership during fall 2011. The idea was that Truman would provide interns to help McIntosh with her work while the students learn about how archives work, Gall said.

Gall said he is responsible for recruiting the interns, reading the reflections they write about their experience and making sure they get the academic credit.

"It's a great hands-on experience with a real professional, and it provides a very valuable service for the state, too," Gall said.

Each semester, the state sends people to Truman to train the interns and the University provides the funds for the students to go to Jefferson City and tour the state archives.

The interns help McIntosh go through and process the cases. There only are four interns each semester and McIntosh said they accomplish during one year what would have taken her three years to do alone. For example, during January they started on the records for Clark County,



Submitted photo

Students who participated in the Judicial Archives Project on the Truman campus recently met with Missouri Secretary of State Jason Kander, fourth from the right. The students get academic credit for working with Missouri State Archivist Mary McIntosh, far left.

which date back to 1835, and now are processing records from 1859.

"You get an insight into the everyday lives of people in the 1800s and kind of see what was important to them, what they would sue over, what they fought over, all that kind of stuff," said senior Staci Sanders, a Judicial Archives Project intern who worked with archives at the Truman Presidential Library during the summer. "It's given me the experience to show that this is the field I want to go in."

As the professional working with students, McIntosh said she learns not to take her job for granted. She said she has been working with case files since 1999 and said she forgets how difficult her job is.

"I enjoy working with them in that they get excited about things I've been seeing for years and have kind of become jaded by," McIntosh said.

For anybody who wants to learn about 19th century history and the importance of preserving the past, the Judicial Archives

Project is a great hands-on way to do that, Gall said.

"This is an exceptional learning experience that exposes students to a field of work that they probably never imagined, let alone experienced," Secretary of State Jason Kander wrote in an email about the project. "With the support and mentoring of the Archives staff, the students will have many opportunities to learn first-hand how to start careers in records management and archival work."

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