



As a requirement of the Praxis track, established during 2013 for students heading into art history-based careers, within the art history program, several Truman students completed 140-hour internships this summer for their senior capstone project. Senior Shelby Thrasher worked with Kirksville children at a summer program and provided free art education and free lunches to those in need. Thrasher will present information about finding and applying for art-related internships in partnership with the Career Center during late October.



What was your position this summer?



"My position this summer was Art in the Park Program Director through Kirksville Arts Association in conjunction with the Kirksville Parks and Recreation Department."



What were your main responsibilities while completing this internship?



"My main responsibilities were planning and organizing the program. With this, I created a program proposal and was granted money to purchase materials for the program. Throughout the month of July, I traveled to various parks within the community along with two [volunteers of the Kirksville Arts Association], Seymour Aprelilio and Juliet Desnoyer, creating artwork with children."



What drew you to this specific opportunity?



"I was interested in this program mainly because I like working with children. I believe that art education and appreciation is something that should start at a young age, so I was eager to introduce the kids in the community to some of my favorite artists."



What did you learn from this experience that you wouldn't have learned in a classroom setting?



"Through this, I learned how to work with children. There were some projects that we tried that were complete flops, while others were a hit. This was something that we couldn't have prepared for, so flexibility was key."



How did your coursework prepare you for this internship?



"There wasn't much that my coursework prepared me for. Since I've never studied elementary education or art in the elementary, I was learning as I went. This experience definitely made me consider going into art education, which is a path I've never considered until now."



Do you have any interesting stories from your experience?



"As always, working with kids made for some pretty funny stories. Some of my favorites included a little boy introducing his friend by stating that he had a grandpa and a boy pulling me aside to tell me that both he and his mom are spies. One day at PC Mills park, we were working on our 3D art project. The park was pretty quiet. Suddenly, we hear screaming in the distance. All of a sudden, a wave of small children come running from in between houses with foam swords and shields. We were being ambushed by tiny [live action role players]."



What was the most important thing you took away from this internship?



"What I took away from this experience is the importance of art education. We were working in PC Mills twice a week because it is a relatively underserved area. Most of the children we were working with were being introduced to art concepts for the very first time. By the end of the program, we would have kids tell us how much fun they were having or how much they loved making art with us. One kid told me he wanted to open an art gallery when he grew up, and he wanted to showcase children's art. I'm so glad that I was able to work within the community of Kirksville and hopefully make a difference in these children's lives."

Students, faculty contemplate the meaning behind the University name

BY NATALIE CARBERY
Features Reporter

During 1995 Northeast Missouri State adopted a new, state-wide mission under University President Jack Magruder. The new mission provided a liberal arts foundation for the school while maintaining an affordable public education. With a new mission came a new name — Truman State University.

Harry S. Truman was the last president of the United States to take office without a college education, according to whitehouse.gov. Born in Lamar, Missouri, and raised in Independence, Missouri, Truman was raised in a farming environment and could not afford to go to college.

"He regretted not getting a formal education," University President Troy Paino said. He said his ability to rise in politics had less to do with a costly education and more to do with his "grit, determination and political savvy."

The irony of Truman's lack of education has not been wasted on history professor Jeff Gall.

"It is an 'only-in-America' story," Gall said. He attributes Truman's success to being a fantastic reader with a great understanding of others.

"He wanted to go to college but could not afford to. He wanted to go to West Point but couldn't due to [his] poor eyesight," Gall said. "I think he was honest and unpretentious, a plain speaker. He knew who he was."

Truman was a proponent of Roosevelt's Servicemen's Readjustment Act of 1944, the "G.I. Bill," which grants military personnel educational assistance. The G.I. Bill provided for men and women who were in his position to obtain an education, Gall said.

His presidency was not without controversial choices, such as making the final decision to drop the atomic bombs on Japan and the Korean War. These choices made Truman unpopular as he left office, with the lowest approval rating to date, Gall said.

However, Truman's choice to drop the atomic bombs now often is regarded differently.

"[We have to] credit him for taking responsibility for his decisions and taking on those challenges," Paino said of Truman's choice to bomb Japan.

Gall said he agrees. "Historical consensus is more and more clear that he picked the least evil of so many evil options," Gall said. "In the long run it is a decision that saved lives, both American and Japanese."

Many students could not agree more. Senior history major Staci Sanders thinks Truman made the right choice.

"Anyone who actually knows the history surrounding the atomic bomb can reason [his decision] and those who condemn Truman for his actions are refusing to look at history objectively," Sanders said.

"The politics of the time gave Truman no other choice than to drop the atomic bomb in order to stay with the policy of ending the war as quickly as possible with as few American casualties as possible."

However, sophomore Katie Boesch said she struggles with his choice to drop the bombs.

"I wrestle with this idea a lot, actually. I think a lot of times people choose to forget about the bad and focus on the good," Boesch said.

She compares Truman's choice to President Abraham Lincoln suspending habeas corpus during the Civil War — a painful means to an end.

Truman's values of education and civil service, not his controversies, have built his legacy, Boesch said.

The staples of Truman's presidency and reputation are the qualities that Paino hopes Truman State students will take with them into the future.

"I believe he acted with great integrity in his service. Harry Truman is someone we can be proud to be named after," Paino said. "I hope the students take civil involvement into the 21st century."

Students should be proud to go to a school named after Truman, Sanders said.

"Truman was a great president and a greater man — he deserves to be honored in this way," Sanders said of the decision to name the school after

America's 33rd president.

"His legacy makes me proud to call myself a student of Truman State," Sanders said.

Truman instituted the Marshall Plan during 1947, according to whitehouse.gov. Under this plan, American soldiers were sent to help reestablish Europe after World War II.

"A veteran of [World War I] put so much money into rebuilding Germany as well as our allies [after World War II]," Gall said. "It was a great humanitarian gesture and a great moment in American history."

As a Cub Scout in Independence, Gall met a post-presidential Truman. This meeting left an impression on Gall, who teaches a class about Truman's presidency every three years.

"Unlike modern public servants, he refused to take big speaking fees. He was a very patriotic American. It's really a shame that we don't do more at Truman State to talk about who Harry Truman really was," Gall said.