

Farewell from the Opinions Editor



Umme Kulsoom Arif
2015-16 Opinions Editor

Well, here we are. The end of another wonderful year and, for me, the end of my career at Truman State. For the past year I've served the Truman State University Index as the opinions editor, a job I enjoyed immensely, despite my occasional ranting complaints.

I was a junior when I applied to join the Index — spurred on by my roommate, Copy Chief senior Rose vonHatten. But, funnily enough, instead of opinions, I applied to become a news reporter. Junior Austin Hornbostel, 2016-17 editor-in-chief, who was the assistant news editor at the time, interviewed me for the position, only to decide that I was better suited to opinions instead.

He was right.

For anyone who knows me even slightly, I'm a very opinionated person. And that is an understatement. Often, vonHatten lovingly refers to me as a concentrated ball of rage — the energy-efficient size, if you will. I have an opinion on everything, down to whether or not ballpoint pens are better than gel ones. The answer, by the way, is that they are not.

I loved being a columnist. Writing is and always will be one of my greatest passions. The columnist position meant I could share my opinions freely. I loved the position and wanted to write constantly.

But I quit midway through my first semester, too stressed out to juggle my classes and my job. Still, alumna Megan Archer, then the opinions editor, was happy to welcome me back for the spring semester, and once I found a rhythm, it was easy. I wrote columns about everything, from personal experiences with racism to the benefits of knitting and crocheting.

I ended up spending a lot of time in the Index office, always waiting for vonHatten to finish with a late night at work, just to drive her home. To kill time, I'd help out where I could, editing articles even though I wasn't that great at it.

Still, being there was enough. I was happy to drive people back to their residence halls and apartments on the way to driving back to mine with vonHatten. This earned me the name "the Index taxi" in the process, as I drove any number of coworkers home. On one memorable occasion, I drove alumnus Bob Overmann, then editor-in-chief, home after nearly running him over at 4:30 a.m. when he ran out in front of my car.

When the opinions editor position opened up, I went for it on a whim. The worst anyone could tell me was no, after all. Instead, senior Bethany Boyle, former editor-in-chief, told me, "We've already filled the position," and, after seeing my disappointed face, went on to say, "Congrats."

I'm not ashamed to admit I fell on the floor in surprise.

I loved being the opinions editor. I loved the camaraderie of the office, Tuscany Tuesdays ordering pizza, pasta, or Chinese food with Boyle, and the knowledge that I was helping put together a paper I could be proud of, among other great memories.

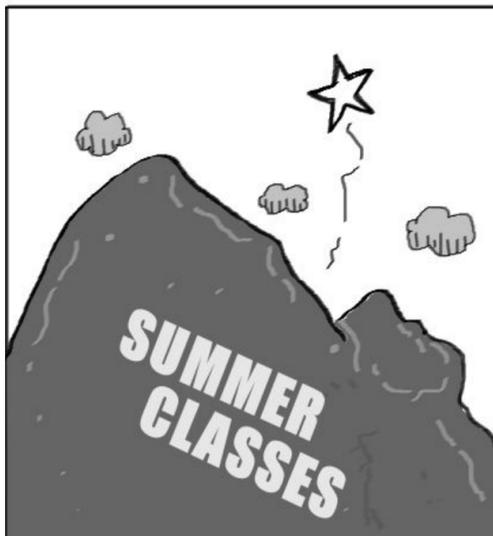
My greatest regret as opinions editor is that I didn't write as much as I wanted. The job was time consuming, so I let my own opinions fall to the wayside in favor of uplifting the opinions of my amazing staff. I don't regret giving them a platform. They, like me, all have strong opinions that deserve to be heard. As I graduate, I have high hopes for the ones who remain.

It feels a little strange leaving the Index now. Working there gave my opinions a purpose. Even with the job, I always felt like I was "too much." I was too opinionated, too loud, too keen on debating a topic, too easy to write off as just angry. Sometimes, I felt like a court jester, posturing for someone else's entertainment when, in my heart, I had so much to say and not enough time to say it.

As I leave the Index and hand my position off to sophomore Will Chaney, I have one thing left to say. Don't be afraid to embrace your passions. My passion for writing and my strong opinions earned me a job I will never forget, for good or for ill. And you are no one's court jester. Your opinions and passions are valid, no matter how mundane others tell you they are. As Sara Bareilles once sang, "Say what you wanna say, and let the words fall out. Honestly, I wanna see you be brave."

UmmeKulsoom Arif is a senior justice systems major from St. Louis, Mo.

See Ya Later by August Davis



Thank you all for reading.
I hope you enjoyed my comics
as much as I enjoyed making them.
I wish you all the best of luck.
See you next year.
— August Davis



The end of the year at Truman is punctuated with goodbyes. In addition to students graduating, we say farewell to many esteemed friends on the faculty and staff. Most well know this year is President Paino's departure. There's also Michelle Horvath leaving for an exciting new position in student conduct. Don't even get me started on how strange Truman will be without the wonderful Jeff Gall teaching history and education in the fall. These are just a few. There are many, many more. I'll miss everyone heading on to new adventures, but none more than my buddy Tyler Madsen. I've been honored to call Tyler my friend on campus for so many years. Tuesday was his last day, and already I miss that guy so much.

For eight years, Tyler served as the assistant director of athletics communications. Along with Kevin White, Tyler covered every match, meet, game, dual, and tourney the Bulldogs took on. He drafted stories for media, meticulously recorded statistics for each player, and oversaw the logistics of game-day operations. He did all this in the finest tradition of a Truman staff member. Tyler was devoted to the success of the student athletes he covered. He got to know them well and was their professional voice to the world. In recent years, he took on coaching responsibilities for men's and women's golf. He even represented Truman by serving as a leader on the national planning teams for the Division II baseball and soccer championships.

Tyler's work kept him out on the road, kept him at Pershing late at night, and kept him busy checking his phone for scores. This wasn't work he begrudgingly took on. He ran to it, something he'd done since he was a student. Tyler came to Truman to play Bulldog soccer, but when injury sidelined those dreams, he began covering athletics as a member of The Index's writing staff. He worked as a student employee in the athletics department. Tyler also served in Residence Life. He was a Student Advisor at Dobson Hall and

twice served as an assistant hall director. When he graduated, Tyler took on the full time position with athletics. You should have seen the smile on his face that day.

Tyler's character highlights why I'm proud to work at Truman. If there was a job to be done, Tyler was going to do it well. He understood that each part of the institution plays a vital role in the overall success, which meant he would go the extra mile and take the extra minute. He cared deeply about the success of our school and was committed to seeing Truman as the fine institution it was, is, and can be.

Tyler and his wife Danielle (also an alum) are headed to Jefferson City with new roles at new institutions. They join many others now saying goodbye to Truman and Kirksville. Those of us here will not soon forget all you've done for this place. I'll miss you, buddy.

*Zac Burden
Missouri Hall Director*

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