

# Truman recognizes graduate studies

BY COURTNEY KAUFFMAN  
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October normally is known for falling leaves, jack-o-lanterns and scary ghouls hanging from every other house, but this year on Truman State's campus, October was known as Graduate Education Month.

Each year, the Missouri governor issues a proclamation stating when Graduate Education Week will occur during the year in an effort to further the growth of higher education among students.

Maria Di Stefano, dean of graduate studies, said previously Graduate Education Week was during April, but moved to October to coincide with the proclamation by Gov. Jay Nixon.

"When we started planning for this [Graduate Education Week], we decided that there were a number of activities that we actually wanted to put in place but did not fit within that week, so we decided to go with the celebration for the whole month," Di Stefano said.

Di Stefano said Truman has eight graduate programs — biology, music, English, education, communication disorders, accounting, leadership and school counseling — and approximately 350 students pursuing degree and non-degree programs.

Di Stefano said nearly half of Truman students pursue graduate education and it

is a path very much in tune with what Truman students want to do with their future.

"Graduate education is absolutely an essential part of the higher education system and in the U.S. the value that derives from it is extensive, so it's a very important piece of what we do at Truman as well," di Stefano said.

Di Stefano said the one event which has been at the core of Graduate Education Week since its beginning is the graduate student appreciation lunch. Di Stefano said this event is an opportunity for the students to take a break from what they are doing and get to know students in the other graduate programs.

Alumna Stephanie Dunn, graduate office secretary, said she mainly was in charge of putting the events together, collecting contact information, updating the website for Graduate Education Month and keeping the graduate students well-informed.

Dunn said the Graduate Education Month committee challenged each graduate program to host its own event for Graduate Education Month, which many programs accepted. The challenge, she said, not only was designed to spread awareness of the graduate programs, but also to interact with and benefit the community in some way.

Dunn said she loves being able to interact with the graduate students and said it's



Courtney Kauffman/Index

Children create festive spiders Monday night at Spooktacular Fun Night, a free speech and health clinic for the Kirksville community. Communication disorders graduate students hosted this event for Graduate Education Month.

exciting for her to see the happiness of the students when they get accepted into the programs they want.

Graduate student Michael Essmyer said he was drawn to Truman's biology graduate program because he knew he could focus on the research that interested him — nest survival rates of grassland birds.

Essmyer said he enjoys being a part of the process of creating interesting events. Essmyer said as soon as he was informed about the committee, he was interested.

Essmyer said the Graduate Education Month committee meetings focused on creating ideas and looking at past Graduate Weeks, as well as looking at what other schools had done.

Essmyer said his main role was leading the event for the biology department — "Selfie with a Snake."

"I think a lot of the other events were centered around the grad students and

## GRAD MONTH EVENTS

Oct. 29

- Taxes for Everyone

5 p.m. in the SUB Alumni Room

- Escaping the Agrochemical Treadmill

7 p.m. in Magruder Hall 2001

Oct. 30

- Selfie with a Snake!

6 - 9 p.m. in the Magruder Hall Herpetarium

college students and I wanted to do something that reached out more towards the community and specifically younger kids," Essmyer said.

# Students rock out at New Horizons

BY RACHEL FECHTER  
Staff Writer

Truman State students experienced new genres of music and had the chance to interact with composers last Saturday at the New Horizons Music Festival.

Collaborative Truman pianists Michael Bunchman and Teng-Kuan Wang dueted with pianos, and an ensemble of trombone players stomped their feet between complex rhythms during a piece called "Mushroom Haiku." The Binary Canary duo played songs using woodwind instruments with a laptop playing electronically mixed beats in the background and Wind Symphony I closed the show by playing an original three-part piece, "Wayward Images" composed by Michael Ippolito, based on three pieces of surrealist art from the 1920's.

Senior Christina Scocchera, festival chair and euphonium player in Wind Symphony I, said she was excited to have three different composers creating music for Truman ensembles to perform this year.

"I like the fact that we get to work directly with the composer," Scocchera said. "That's something unique, especially this year, because it's a great way to explore how composers nowadays are composing. It's a different way of looking at music."

Freshman Andrew Schaper, Wind Symphony I member and french horn player, said he had a strong appreciation for the song "Wayward Images."

Schaper said he hopes to one day compose his own pieces of music like Truman music professor Charles Gran, who composed for the festival this year.

"We have composers here on our faculty, but it's cool to see other people from around the country showing what they can do," Schaper said. "It gives a broader perspective than just what we have at Truman."

Schaper said his main goal is to be a film composer, but he'd love to have his own music featured in this festival because of his connection to the school.

Schaper also said he hoped the New Horizons concert would promote contemporary music and keep it from dying out.

"I think it's important to get a wide spectrum of what kind of music is being played nowadays," Schaper said. "If people don't appreciate things like this, that art form is going to die out eventually, so I think it's important people keep events like this alive."

Freshman Anna Nicks, who played in the trombone ensemble at the festival, said she hoped students would challenge the resistance they felt about the unfamiliar genre of music and give it a chance.

"I will be the first to admit that I don't have a lot of experience when it comes to contemporary music, but I thought it was enjoyable and super exciting to listen to," Nicks said. "A lot of people think of classical music as boring and stuffy old music, but I don't think that concert would be considered boring and old."

For more information about the performances and presentations featured at the festival, visit [nhmf.truman.edu](http://nhmf.truman.edu).

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-Freshman Andrew Schaper

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and be  
Happy

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Drink,  
and be  
Happy

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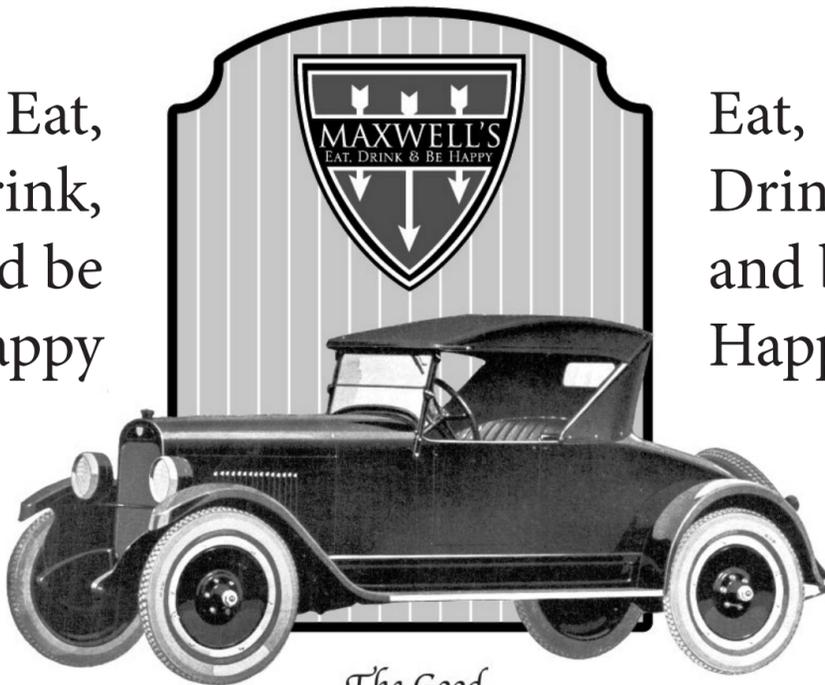
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