

Dean's Message



When invitations went out to participate in our first focus group sessions, CBHS alums responded beyond my expectations. The open and honest discussions were an awesome, humbling experience that has left me True Blue proud! The sessions and one-on-one alumni meetings have produced great suggestions for moving CBHS forward. Suggestions, such as launching a Facebook page, were relatively easy; others like expanding our Ph.D. offerings will take time.

A powerful part of the conversations for me was hearing the one-word descriptions (mostly) that summed up each alum's MTSU student experience. The deeper explanations and backstories had very common themes - leaving home for the first time, determined to make it, and even more determined to make a difference.

Like so many of our alums, I chose psychology because I wanted to be of service and help others. MTSU has afforded me that opportunity.

There are those like Jim Holland, Rochelle Bridges-Johnson, and Pam Wright who have used the knowledge, discipline, and skills gained at MTSU to bridge success in industry and enterprise. Kris Thomas, who had us all cheering for his success on *The Voice*, continues to talk about how his degree in psychology provides him with tools for self-coaching as a singer and songwriter.

We want to tell the stories of these alums and many others who are finding great success in their degree fields. Jan Hibdon, a CBHS Advisory Board Member, has earned three nursing degrees and might pursue a fourth if we can get a Ph.D. program. There is more than one reason that we need to share these stories with you and with the world. Each time any CBHS alum has a notable achievement or success, it increases the "value of degree" for all. Not only that, it gives us bragging rights. "Little Middle" no longer applies!

Alums are the greatest testament of how great a university is and can be. Strong alumni engagements and networks can have a positive influence—on recruitment and retention; expansion of degree offerings; positive and expanded press coverage; and corporate and foundation support—all of which ultimately contribute to increasing the value of every MTSU degree. We realize how our alums can help us to become great.

The contribution of time, talent, and treasure from CBHS alumni will support our efforts to continue to build a college and University that will keep us all True Blue proud! **CBHS**

Terry Whiteside
Dean Terry Whiteside

Alums Give the Dean a Piece of Their Minds

Focus Groups Reveal True Blue Alums

During summer 2013, Dean Whiteside conducted CBHS alumni focus group sessions in Brentwood, Murfreesboro, and Nashville. We wanted to learn about their student experiences and their professional and personal journeys. We also wanted to understand how we might strengthen their connection to CBHS and MTSU. Here are some of the suggestions and early follow-up. **CBHS**

Bea Y. Perdue
CBHS Development Director

Alums want to see a CBHS social media presence. (i.e., Facebook, LinkedIn, and Twitter)

We launched the Dean Series, **A Focus on New and Better Outcomes**, to build community connections and share CBHS' wealth of knowledge.

Alums are aware of the challenges of student retention. They are eager to mentor students and help identify and influence internship and employment opportunities.

Homecoming 2013 features opportunities for alumni to visit classrooms and speak with students about their MTSU experiences, provide career consultation, and, as one CBHS alum put it, "tell and show them with a living example that they can make it through to the end, and never will they have a better feeling than walking across that stage on graduation day."

Based on response, this program could also be part of Alumni Weekend.

Alums want to know that we are making a concerted effort to dispel the "Little Middle" perception, with more effective marketing and messaging.

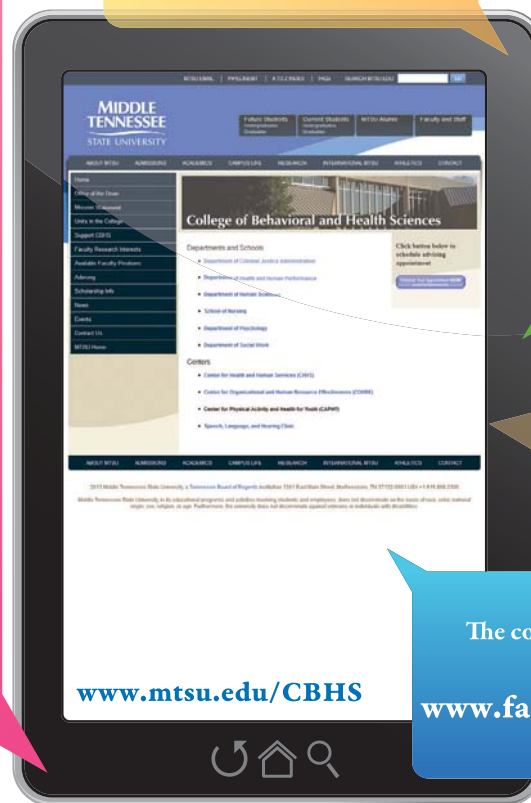
We understand that graduates are looking for ways in which the University will continue to add value to their degrees. The three things that most influence the value of a university degree are: the success of graduates, retention and graduation rates of current students, and the successful solicitation of financial support.

We will continue to explore ways to share the success of CBHS graduates and look for opportunities to assist them in building stronger MTSU networks. The value of all degrees will increase exponentially in proportion to the number of relationships that can be established and cultivated personally and professionally. We also shared the thoughts of participants with MTSU marketing and communication leaders.

The first CBHS newsletter was published in spring/summer 2013.

The College Magazine, *Outcomes*, will launch in winter 2013.

The college launched a Facebook page. Like us at www.facebook.com/MTSUCBHS



www.mtsu.edu/CBHS

Expanded (Mind)

FULFILLING²

Continuous

Convenient

Fantastic

Caring and Engaging

Home²

Much-Growth

Dynamic

Prepared

MEMORABLE

Comfortable

Died and Gone to Heaven

(one word was impossible)

One word descriptions from focus group participants in Nashville, hosted by Pam Wright (Psychology '73).

CBHS Advisory Board Welcomes Alum Kris Thomas Back to MTSU

NBC's *The Voice* contestant and CBHS alum Kris Thomas (Psychology '08) returned to MTSU to perform the national anthem at the MTSU/Memphis game in September. More than thirty guests were on hand, along with Dean Whiteside and members of the CBHS Advisory Board, to greet him.



Kris Thomas singing the national anthem

Dean Whiteside with Kris Thomas

Bobbie Johnson (Social Work '89) and Kris

CBHS Advisory Board Member Melinda Rigsby, Dean Whiteside, and Kris

Patsy Weiler, Randy Weiler and Kris

Kris and CBHS Advisory Board Member Jim Holland

Will Langston (I), Kris, and Rick Moffett

Whatever I Can Do to Help!

Words that Make All the Difference

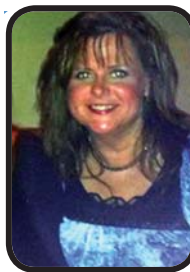
Jim Holland (Psychology '66) knows a thing or two about what it takes to have a successful enterprise. He learned the value of hard work as a boy growing up on a farm in a town smaller than today's Student Union at MTSU. The education he received with was the foundation of his ability to build a very successful professional staffing firm that he sold to a Japanese company in 2007 "for a profit." During his years of heading the Holland Group, he hired Ivy League and MTSU graduates. Overall, he found the MTSU graduates to be his best employees. *"They were well-rounded and prepared with not just knowledge but the soft skills needed to conduct business in the most efficient and effective way."*

In a Murfreesboro focus group session, Jim's one word to describe his MTSU experience was "relevant." He wants CBHS graduates to understand what leaders most need from their employees, and understand how to present themselves in a way that *"never gives an organization a reason not to hire you or promote you."*

CBHS has work to do, and Jim knows he has knowledge and experience that can contribute greatly. Like the other CBHS Advisory Board Members, when asked to serve, his answer began with, *"Whatever I can do to help."*

Jim (pictured above) joins Alums Angela Farmer (Home Economics '87), Janice Hibdon (Nursing '84, '04, '09), Nada Latto (Home Economics '86), and Melinda Rigsby (Psychology '77) as our first Advisory Board Members.

Alums Creating New and Better Outcomes



Her mother, grandmother and great aunt were MTSU alums and celebrated Tennessee teachers, and her great uncle, James W. Malone, served as a trustee. She is a Commissioners' Coin of Excellence recipient as a Regional Absconder Representative with thirteen years of service.

Dana Clegg (Family and Consumer Studies '96)
Department of Children Services, State of Tennessee

A talented designer who also has a passion for environmental conservation and sustainability. She will be encouraging her freshman daughter (Anna) to withstand the rigors of pre-nursing at MTSU.

Mimi Keisling (Interior Design '93)
Environmental Education Coordinator, Rutherford County Government



The confidence she gained as a student, combined with her faith, told her she should take advantage of an offer to move into sales and marketing. She has been recognized for her tremendous success at building and supporting agencies for an insurance giant.

Rochelle Bridges-Johnson (Social Work '77)
Field Service Leader, Allstate

He earned his degree while working full time to support his family. The continued support of his professors, the relevance of his chosen curriculum, and his qualifications upon graduation have propelled his career.

Kawel B. LauBach (I/O '01)
Chief Human Resources Officer, Mohegan Tribal Gaming Authority



They met pursuing master's degrees in MTSU's top ranked Industrial/Organization (I/O) Psychology program. Both executives work to help organizations focus on building, retaining, and growing talent. Both credit the rigorous curriculum and experiential learning at MTSU as keys to their success.

Ali Jerden (I/O '98) Coca-Cola Corporation
Eddie Jerden (I/O '99) DDI Atlanta

Photo courtesy of Zoomworks Photography

After serving as a doping control officer for three Olympic Games (London, Vancouver, and Salt Lake City), in 2012 he was appointed to the board of directors of the United States Anti-doping Agency.

Ken Wright (Health and Human Performance '84)
Professor and Director, Sports Management Program
University of Alabama



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Tell us about a true **BLUE** alum. Contact Bea.Perdue@mtsu.edu.