

December 2019

Missouri State University

the

# Bear Print





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## A Time to be Thankful

Welcome to another edition of the CM Alumni Magazine – The Bear Print. The close of another semester is always an exciting time on campus, but this year we are also cognizant of how thankful we must be for all the amazing things that are happening all around the University. These changes are signs that the Technology and Construction Management (TCM) Department is not only reaching new levels of achievement but also growing into a hub of construction education and research. There are many people that have helped us reach these new heights - our students, our faculty, our alumni, and our industry partners. We hope this issue shines a little light on all these different aspects that make our department and our program so special.

The TCM Department welcomed a new tenure track, assistant professor this fall – Dr. Jim Peterson. His expertise in surveying, unmanned aerial vehicles (e.g., drones), and heavy/civil construction promise to be areas of strength moving forward in the department. In addition, his passion for teaching and his efforts to engage students in research and service activities are all reasons why he is excited about making his MISSOURI STATEment here. Check out more information about Dr. Peterson in his faculty spotlight inside this issue.

The Construction Club and the other CM student organizations continue their track record of success in both competitions and educational programming. Three teams placed in the 27th Annual Associated Schools of Construction (ASC) Region 4 Competition. The MEP club looks to send a strong contingent to the MCAA National Competition in Hawaii, and the Missouri State University chapter of Sigma Lambda Chi won top honors again from its national organization. The Construction Club brought speakers from several different industries and the Women in Construction group expanded upon its industry networking and service work. More details on each club are presented inside.

Lastly, the program would not be what it is today without its industry supporters. This includes the companies on the Construction Management Advisory Board (CMAB), the entities that choose to recruit students for internships and full-time positions from our program, and the alumni who demonstrate day in and day out what it means to be Bear Built! Thanks to all of you for what you do.

~Dr. Richard Gebken, CM Program Coordinator



# ASC Region 4 Student Competition

Students from both the construction management and interior design programs competed in the 27th Annual Associated Schools of Construction Region 4 competition in late October. Loading up and heading to Nebraska City, Nebraska, team members were very eager to show off the hard work they had put in already and continue the tradition of success.

As in recent years, Missouri State sent five teams to compete against school from all over the upper mid-west including: Missouri, Kansas, Nebraska, North & South Dakota, Iowa, and Minnesota. Each team competed in one of the five divisions: commercial (new construction), commercial (renovation), heavy/highway, design-build, and specialty. Industry sponsors served as both problem statement creators and competition judges. Over a 16-hour period, six-member teams would be required to complete full project estimates, schedules, and project execution strategies for projects they had never seen before located all over the United States.

The Missouri State students did not disappoint, bringing home honors in three different divisions. The specialty team, who undertook an electrical project this year, won second place in their division; while, the new construction commercial and heavy/highway teams both placed third. Not only were the students recognized at the ASC Awards Breakfast, but they were all invited to the 35th Annual Salute to Design and Construction Awards in Springfield, Missouri in November.

This success is only possible from the collaboration of our industry supporters whose donations help make the competition trip possible. We look forward to next year's competition and wish next year's teams good luck!



▲ **2nd Place Specialty**  
Jacob Arnold, Easton Dunning, Erica Vaughn, Tate Vickers, Spencer Prichard, Will Meyer, and coach Jacob Nelson.



▲ **3rd Place Heavy/Highway**  
Carl Paetow, Jacob Johnson, Lathan Kerans, Brandon Lefresne, Owen Conrath, Taylor Monzyk, and coach Jim Peterson.



▲ **3rd Place Commercial New Construction**  
Lily Quitno, Megan O'Leary, Tanner Hartman, Ryan Sweeney, Evan Fullerton, and coach David Joswick.



## Alumni Spotlight: David Atkisson

David Atkisson is a 1999 graduate of the program and currently lives in Springfield, MO with his wife Tabitha, their four children and their six year old son they adopted from Haiti. Although there isn't much, some of their spare time during the 2019-2020 school year will be filled with hosting a foreign exchange student from Brazil. David and his family are also very active with their Church and community. David enjoys spending time serving his community in many different roles including being an active board member, and former president of, the MSU Department of Technology and Construction Management CM Advisory Board.

### What does your typical day look like?

While some days are typical, many are certainly not. Typical days consist of multiple meetings, several sessions of catching-up on e-mails and phone calls, and a maybe a jobsite walk. Due to involvement in several industry-related organizations and volunteer community leadership, I typically have a few board and/or committee meetings each week.

### What projects have you been working on?

Our team recently wrapped-up the new \$16M Willard Intermediate School project, recently started the new \$30M CoxHealth replacement hospital in Monett, and are in the preconstruction phase of the new \$130M Greene County Sheriff's Office and Jail project that should get underway early in 2020.

### What are some of the most valuable things you've learned on the job?

Do the hard things first. It's easy to do a bunch of lower-importance tasks daily, leading yourself to believe you've accomplished much...all while ignoring the most important things because they are challenging or maybe even

intimidating. Often the hard things are what need to be done most. This doesn't mean little things don't matter. They do!

### What have been some keys to your success since leaving MSU?

Hard work. If you truly give it your best, chances are it will be good enough.

### What is the best advice you've been given?

"The only things we build better than our buildings are our relationships." William H. Dunn Sr.

### What advice would you give soon-to-be graduates?

Be wise with your money. If you haven't done so already, get in the habit of saving and giving as soon as you get your first paycheck from your full-time job. If you get used to spending it all...thinking you can start saving later, it will be MUCH harder! Being disciplined from the start will dramatically improve your financial success. Plus, the time value of money is powerful. The most important years to save and invest are the early years of your career.

### Why do you love the construction industry?

It is very rewarding to be part of something bigger than yourself, and this career path definitely offers such opportunity. While I personally enjoy the business aspects of the construction industry, it is very gratifying to have buildings as the tangible results of our team's efforts.

### Anything else that you can think of? Fun facts, advice, organizations you are involved in outside of work etc?

I've got two things. First, my wife (Tabitha) and I have four children. Our six-year-old son is adopted from Haiti. Second, for the entire 2019 - 2020 school year our family is hosting a foreign exchange student from Brazil.



# Faculty Spotlight: Dr. Jim Peterson



Dr. Peterson arrived in fall of 2019 as an Assistant Professor for the Department of Technology and Construction Management at Missouri State University. Jim focuses on Heavy Civil Construction and teaches construction, surveying, and UAS (Drone) related classes. Previously, he was an Assistant Professor of the UAS degree at Southeast Missouri State University. He also was an adjunct professor at Southern Illinois University at Edwardsville (2005-2017) where he completed his M.S. in Civil Engineering (C.E.) and helped start the Land Surveying Specialization.

Over the years, Jim had made some connections through work that lead him to the Missouri State Construction Management program. He had visited to give presentations involving new technology. Jim says he was enthused by the growth of MSU and the TCM department, along with having



a dedicated and well-known Program Director such as Dr. Richard Gebken, and the experienced faculty and staff.

Jim has over 28 years of experience as a constructor, professional surveyor, professional engineer, educator, and researcher with his FAA Part 107 Remote Pilot Certificate. His career took him across North America, Europe, and Australia promoting mobile mapping and unmanned aircraft systems (UAS) in mining and construction.

Jim was a Technical Manager at the Center of Expertise for Photogrammetric Mapping at the U. S. Army Corps of Engineers in St. Louis. He has been a Vice-President of aerial mapping companies, managed and owned several engineering, surveying, and construction companies. He was also a Domain Expert for Trimble Navigation and Gatewing.

This fall, his Heavy Civil team competed in the ASC Region 4 Competition where they won 3rd place. This was Jim and all of his students first year competing. "There is some tough competition at ASC. The team had some real-world experience thanks to internships with local construction companies that really helped the students hit the important points."

Jim's goals for the department is to implement some of the latest technology in construction and show students how much fun heavy civil construction can be. He is looking forward to meeting everyone involved in TCM and has been very enthused to see how much the alumni and the advisory board are involved.

**The Drone Dood!**



# Missouri State Women In Construction

During this past semester, the Missouri State Women in Construction (MSWIC) club focused on encouraging women in the CM program to get involved in and out of the classroom. The women have participated in club meetings, community service projects, and taken the time to bond as a group. The group has tried to create more of a presence on campus and at different university events to promote its mission and recruit new members. The group is one of several ways the construction management program is looking to not only better the student experience but also offer events and programs for a more diverse student body.

MSWIC officers are strategically working to develop three main areas this academic year: (1) expanding hands-on exposure for members; (2) improving access to industry professionals with similar backgrounds; and, (3) creating a place to easily network with peers in the department. With a small core group of upperclassmen and a large number of underclassmen, MSWIC has really helped everyone grow together. Aside from meetings and school-related activities, the women also took some time to bond as a group. Two unique activities for the group this past semester were an Orange Leaf social night and a holiday wreath making party in December.



# Sigma Lambda Chi

## Upsilon 4 Chapter

### INTERNATIONAL CONSTRUCTION HONOR SOCIETY

Sigma Lambda Chi is the TCM department's honor society for construction management majors. It gives students the academic recognition that they deserve for their hard work in both academic and charitable endeavors. Missouri State's chapter, Upsilon IV, is proud to uphold these tenets as it continues to achieve the Gold Award year after year. The Gold Award status is awarded to chapters for being exceptionally involved in the chapter's institution and community. The most recent group of students were inducted in the Spring Semester of 2019.



The organization is currently led by Chet Meyer, Erica Vaughn, and Lily Quitno who serve as President, Secretary, and Historian, respectively. As the group looks forward to inducting its newest members next semester, active members are working to achieve the three objectives of the organization: (1) render service to the major field of study; (2) develop good relations among campus, industry, and the public; and (3) recognize outstanding professional individuals in construction.





# Construction Club

## News and Updates



The fall semester was a busy one for the Missouri State Construction Club. From monthly meetings and service projects to competition teams and social activities, the Construction Club offered many opportunities for students to get involved in career-related activities.

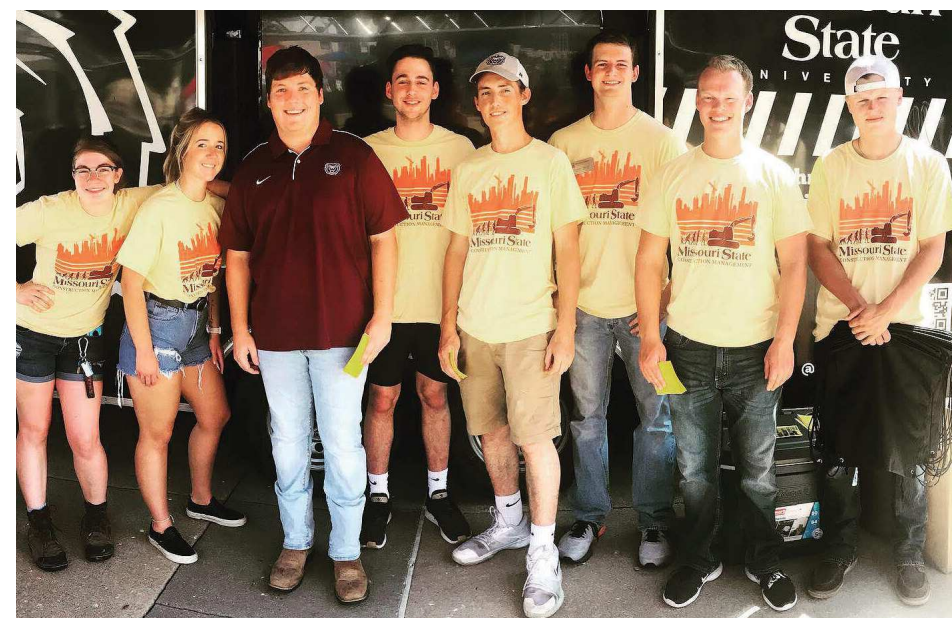
For fall semester meetings, the construction club featured speakers from Emery Sapp and Sons and Newkirk Novak discussing a variety of operational activities at both commercial and heavy/civil projects. In addition, to industry speakers, the club also held two panel discussions aimed at preparation efforts for the career fair. The first was led by current students who had returned from their summer internship, while the second was made up of industry practitioners. Lastly, the club also hosted the Welcome Back BBQ and the 2nd annual Trivia Night event – a new tradition with unexpected fun!

On the service project front, members of the construction club continued their efforts both to clean their Adopt-A-Street location on S. Freemont and

staff mile marker 25's refreshment station along the Bass Pro Marathon. The annual Springfield Contractor Association's Chicken BBQ, the Be Constructive program at Holland Elementary School, and collecting boxes for Operation Christmas Child were some of the many other activities undertaken this past semester.

Of course, what good is working this hard if you can't play hard too? Home football games continued to offer a place for construction management students to have the best home for tailgating. Highlights of the tailgating season included both a record turnout at homecoming weekend and a "Fried Food Faire" at the last home game – including fried turkey, fried donuts, fried pickles, french fries, fried okra, onion rings, and more! Lastly, we can't forget the joint social activities with the clubs in the Interior Design program.

Using social media as a marketing tool, for the program and university, has been a fun way to be creative and get students involved. A project that was started a year ago, continues to make an impact on our student



engagement. The "what's your why?" series has given future students the opportunity to see just how great this program is from the perspective of those who are currently here. It gives our current students a voice when it comes to sharing their personal experiences and also a platform to share advice they might have. Check out these periodic videos by following our Twitter and Instagram accounts (both @MSUTCM).

Ultimately, we can only show the tip of the iceberg when it comes to the activities going on within the Construction Club. We know that focusing on activities like these will help our students both build relationships and make connections that will last a lifetime. The club has been involved in supporting the community, supporting the university, and showing endless support for one-

*I love being a part of the construction club. We have a strong group of leaders helping all students get a better educational experience.*  
- Lily Quitno, Junior

another. This attitude starts with the faculty, is instilled in each student, and is proven that it has changed us for the better by the amount of alumni who continue to help during their professional careers. We are a family here. We are BEAR BUILT!





# Student Spotlight: Tyler Dowden

This semester's student spotlight shines a light on senior CM student - Tyler Dowden. He was born and raised just outside of Nashville, Tennessee. In 2010, when Tyler was a freshman in high school, he moved to Missouri to live with his grandparents. When Tyler graduated high school, he went to Drury University in Springfield, Missouri as a Pre-Med student. While studying at Drury, he met his wife, Ashley.

After a few semesters at Drury, he transferred to Missouri State University where he continued his studies in Pre-Med. However, after some thought, Tyler decided Pre-Med wasn't for him. He started looking into different areas of study that he thought might be interesting to him including areas like science and engineering. None seemed to be quite the right fit. Fortunately at the time, the construction industry was booming. Now married and thinking about the future, Tyler decided that going into construction management was a good move for his family when it came to the amount of time left in school, finding a job afterwards, and being able to support his family financially.

When Tyler was asked about his love for the program, he said, "I really just love how close knit the department is. You get to know the people in your classes, compared to when I was Pre-Med there would be around 150 people in one class. This is one of the best things about our program, along with the faculty." Tyler continued, "The professors genuinely want you to succeed as well. They realize we might have jobs or things going on outside of class and they try to accommodate us the best they can."

Tyler is involved in many things aside from just being in the program. This year he served as the MEP Club President and also an active member in the Construction Club. Tyler



has also participated in the ASC Competition on the design-build team and is a lead member on the MCAA competition team.

When Tyler is not working or doing school-related things, he is spending time with his wife, Ashley, and their labradoodle, Henry. He loves staying active whether that be lifting weights, hiking, or sports, if you are looking for Tyler, there is a good chance you will find on the water or watching the Atlanta Braves play. Tyler is graduating in the spring semester of 2020. We want to wish him and his wife luck on their new adventures and successful futures to come. Congratulations, Tyler! We know you will make us proud and you have so many people rooting for you. Springfield will miss you, but you will always be Bear Built.



# MORE THAN A



## The Power of Networking with Alumni at Career Fairs and Recruiting Events

by Michael Jones, Class of 2011

Given the opportunity, I am more inclined to hire fellow graduates from my alma mater, because there is an inherent connection. It also gives me the ability to create a powerful networking community for students who were in the same position as me once upon a time, all while increasing the value of Missouri State's Construction Management degree. I believe strongly in the students coming out of the program, because I too, was a product of the institution and excelling in my job and a recent college graduate landing his/her first job is firsthand demonstration of the Construction degree's success.

Unfortunately, many students miss major career opportunities due to fear of networking, but I strongly encourage students to push themselves out of their comfort zones and attend recruiting and alumni events. Construction networking is longer-



**Project Manager**  
**Interface**  
**Construction**  
**Corporation**  
**St. Louis, MO**  
**Specialty Area:**  
**Research Labs &**  
**Healthcare**  
**Favorite CM**  
**Program Event:**  
**ASC Competition**

term thinking; it does not necessarily always have to be focused on landing a job, rather about building long-lasting professional relationships that could be very valuable down the road. Construction is a smaller industry than you may think, I have met many people at networking events and ended up working alongside them on various jobs. The power of your network should not be underestimated and can even help you secure more project opportunities for your future company.

Ask people about their experience at Missouri State, their niche, their challenges, listen and learn. Then, use the moment to explain your interests and communicate your value as an emerging professional in the field—what do you want to bring to the table? This exercise is very helpful for interview preparation; networking and recruiting events are excellent places to practice your self-elevator pitch, especially around a bunch of alumni who already hold you in a higher regard than other potential candidates. Alumnus, like myself, are your biggest champion, and I encourage Construction graduates to use us to your fullest advantage. We are all rooting for YOU at the end of the day.





# Alumni Spotlight: Andrew Underwood

The interest in construction was sparked in Andrew Underwood by his grandfather, father, and uncles. At the age of 15, Andrew began building homes for a local contractor. The summer after his freshman year at Missouri State, he traveled to New Orleans working on his first large scale construction project – The Huey P. Long Bridge – as an ironworker. It was at this time that Andrew reached a life-altering moment, “At the conclusion of that summer I knew I wanted to build the largest structures I could get my hands on.”

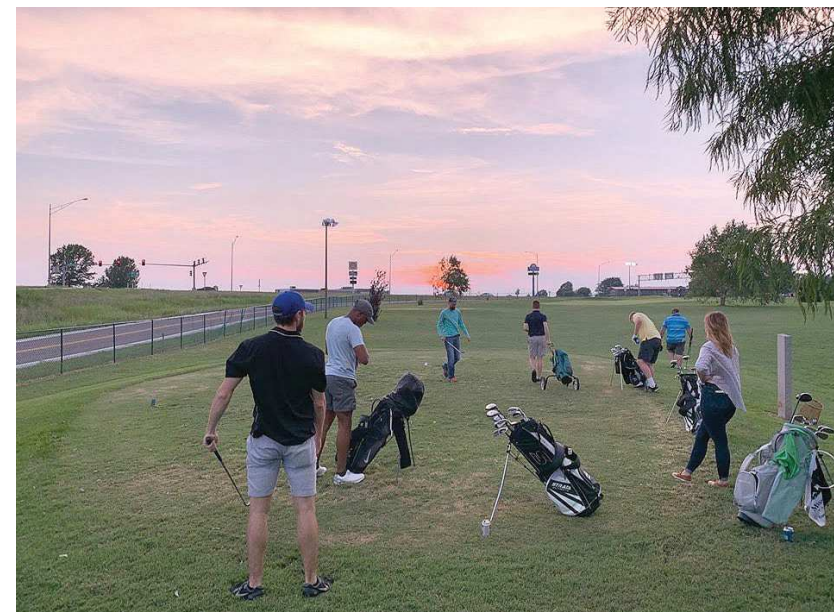
Fueled by this desire, Andrew interned in following summers with KC headquartered Massman Construction. It was with Massman that he was able to expand his knowledge by working on The Huey P. Long Bridge, The Stan Musical Veterans Memorial Bridge (I-70 Bridge – St. Louis, Missouri), and working in the home office – estimating and project proposals. After graduation, Andrew had the opportunity to work as a field engineer on the Nucor Steel Port Facility Dock Terminal in Baton Rouge, Louisiana and the Caney Fork River Bridge in Nashville, Tennessee.

Andrew’s greatest accomplishment was working on a 1.5 billion-dollar P3 Design-Build cable stay bridge – The Goethals Bridge Replacement Project between New York City and New Jersey. This project was a collaboration between Massman, Kiewit, and Weeks. Andrew recounts, “As the bridge grew so did my responsibilities on the project. I was a Field Engineer for the first few years of the project working on drilled shaft foundations and main span towers.” It was on this project that Andrew accepted a promotion as Superintendent. Andrew states, “Completing this massive bridge project is my greatest professional accomplishment thus far.”

Asked how the Missouri State CM program equipped him



for his career, he emphasized not only the theoretical education but also the application-based teaching. He commented, “My education at Missouri State University gave me the tools needed to be a professional in the industry. The programs and competitions offered through the construction management program gave a real-life example of what construction is all about.” Andrews advice for current students and recent graduates is, “Never settle for anything less than extraordinary. Be the example, not the statistic. Leave a legacy.”



## Stay Connected: Alumni Events

Each semester, administrators at the university remind graduating seniors that, “You are only a Missouri State University student for a short time, but ... you will all be Missouri State alumni for the rest of your life!” Given this life-long connection to both the University and the faculty and students in the program, the CMAB helps organize and host events when graduates can catch up with classmates and network with industry peers.

During fall semester, two alumni events were held to further these bonds and connections. The first was the Alumni Night Golf Tournament held the evening before the College of Business Career Fair. This year over 30 alumni and 10 current students played the par-3 course at Oscar Blom in Springfield. If you missed this one, don’t miss the spring golf tournament that is coming up!

The second event of the fall was held in early October. Missouri State CM Alumni in the Kansas City area met up for some festivities at Chicken-N-Pickle. The alumni in attendance enjoyed a couple rounds of pickleball with drinks and great conversations about ongoing projects afterwards. Again, if you missed this one, don’t forget to keep an eye out for our next event - our first KC Alumni & Intern Mixer this summer!



# Alumni Spotlight: Chelsea West

Chelsea West is a May 2015 graduate of the Construction Management program. While on campus she served as President of both the Construction Club and Sigma Lambda Chi among many other student organization leadership positions. Upon graduation, Chelsea was awarded both the College of Business's Delp Award and the TCM Department's Gimbel Achievement Award recognizing top graduating seniors. After school, Chelsea moved to Austin, Texas where she continues to work for Performance Contracting Inc. (PCI) as a Senior Project Engineer. Here are her answers to our spotlight questions.

### **What does your typical day look like?**

No two days are the same, but for the most part, I help my foremen run their project by providing them with the information and materials they need. I manage documentation, finances, material requests, and most of all, develop relationships with my customers. I help my foremen manage quality and production on their projects.

### **What projects have you been working on?**

Dell offices, Roku offices, elementary school renovations, college renovations, hotel new builds, apartment buildings. Oh, and the Tesla Gigafactory in Reno, Nevada.

### **What are some keys to your success after graduation?**

Master the tasks you have been given before you ... then ask for more. Also, don't be afraid to make mistake and own them when you do.

### **What is the best advice you've been given?**

Always ask for help. We are a team and you don't have to put yourself on an island

### **What advice would you give soon-to-be graduates?**

Be patient. It's not a race. You've worked very hard for the past 4+ years, and now you have to start back at the bottom. Take your time to learn how to do things the right way. You can't rush experience.

### **Why do you love the construction industry?**

It's a world of controlled chaos.



# Missouri State Construction Management December 2019 GRADUATES



## Construction Management Advisory Board

The CMAB helps support Missouri State's Construction Management Program through advocacy, development, and engagement. The CMAB is proud to welcome three new companies onto its team in 2019. Interested in joining the CMAB, contact CMAB President Donnie Volentine at [d.volentine@lscinc.com](mailto:d.volentine@lscinc.com).

### **BP Builders**

BP Builders has earned a reputation in SW Missouri as an honest contractor with a commitment to high quality construction. BP Builders was formed in 2015 when competitors, Adam Pyle, owner of Adam Pyle & Associates, and Matt Bailey, owner of The Bailey Company, put competition aside and joined together to create a stronger company with more to offer customers and more opportunity for business growth. Both Pyle and Bailey have spent their entire careers in the construction industry, providing quality work and treating customers with fairness and honesty. Matt Bailey is a graduate of the program and the Board is excited about continued alumni participation on the CMAB.

### **Interface Construction Co.**

Interface Construction Corporation is a full-service general contracting and construction management firm that offers a wide variety of preconstruction and construction services tailored to meet specific project needs. Founded in 1978 by Sam Hutchinson, who remains the company's CEO, Interface started as a concrete construction company. In 1988, Hutchinson transitioned the company from a subcontractor to a general contractor and construction manager. Mike Jones will be the sitting board member on behalf of Interface.

### **Springfield Glass Company**

Springfield Glass Company has provided the best in glass installation to the Springfield area since 1985. For over 30 years, Springfield Glass has provided high-quality glass for both residential and commercial buildings. Grant Miller, Owner, has strong relationships in the Springfield area with local business and is a student of leadership and a natural when it comes to giving back and mentoring. Springfield Glass will be an excellent contributor to the program.



Missouri State University

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Looking for a way to get involved with the Construction Management Advisory Board? Have any articles or possible features for the next newsletter? Contact us using the information below. Find out about the current events at the TCM Department website or by following the TCM Department Twitter or Instagram accounts. We also ask for you to send us your current contact info (e-mail, address and phone) so that we may include you on future newsletters and Advisory Board news!

**Looking  
Ahead**  
&  
Upcoming  
Events

## **Alumni Basketball Event - February 5th, 2020**

Join up with you fellow MSU Alumni who are in the Springfield area. Come enjoy a Bears men's basketball game in JQH Arena on February 5th, 2020 at 7pm. Please email [lily99@live.missouristate.edu](mailto:lily99@live.missouristate.edu) to RSVP!

## **Construction Club Golf Outing - May 8th, 2020**

Over the past 19 years, the Construction Club has hosted the Annual TCM Alumni Golf Tournament for students, faculty, alumni and industry professionals. This year's golf tournament will be held on May 8th, 2020 at the Hidden Valley Golf Course in Clever, MO. This is a great event to catch up with fellow alumni and faculty, all while supporting the Construction Club. Please contact Construction Club President Terry Miles ([Miles135@live.missouristate.edu](mailto:Miles135@live.missouristate.edu)) for more information and registration.

## **College of Business Career Fair - September 15, 2020**

Be sure to sign up early for the COB Career Fair. This is the premier event where companies recruit students for both full-time and internship employment. See the article inside for more information. Register as early at June 2020 by visiting <https://business.missouristate.edu/Fairs.htm>.

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