

What's Mizzou Doing? 'Way Down South in Sikeston?



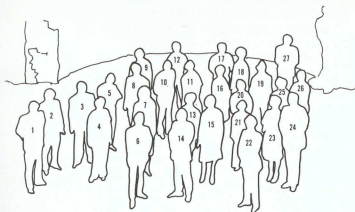


When they say "The University" in Sikeston, they mean the University of Missouri-Columbia. It's certainly not a matter of proximity — the University of Mississippi is closer. It's a matter of impact.

Just as in every corner of the state — including both metropolitan areas — Mizzou's influence in Sikeston is evident through its product — the alumni, who are making substantial contributions to society

— its students, who are enhancing their ability to fulfill such significant roles — and its programs, both on-Campus and off, which are making Sikeston a better place in which to live.

Sikeston, a town of about 15,000 persons,



Mizzou's product is alumni who contribute to the life of the state and the nation in their own hometowns. A cross section of Sikeston alumni posed for a group portrait one evening in June in front of the "Sikeston columns," ruins of a church. Refer to sketch above for identification. (1) Charles Blanton III, newspaper publisher; (2) Ronald Crader, attorney; (3) Donald Fulton, mayor and assistant high school principal; (4) Genie Blanton Rice, homemaker; (5) Fielding Potashnick, attorney and Scott County alumni chairman; (6) David E. Blanton, attorney and chairman of Missouri Election Commission; (7) Judith Murback Bowman, homemaker, businesswoman, member of Alumni Association's Women's Athletics Committee and Campus Intercollegiate Athletic Committee; (8) Bernard C. Rice, attorney; (9) James R. Clay, president of Southeast Chapter of CPAs; (10) William S. Huff, realtor and farmer; (11) Alice Van Horne Huff, homemaker; (12) John E. Harper Jr., travel agent; (13) Irma Wilson Allen, retired teacher; (14) Robert A. Dempster, banker, attorney and trustee of the Jefferson Club; (15) Lu Craft Dye, president of Girl Scout Council; (16) Margaret Harris, retired teacher; (17) Jesse Floyd Cox III, oil dealer; (18) Charlotte Henry Bailey, insurance agent; (19) Frances Mattingly White, teacher; (20) William P. Sappenfield, professor of agronomy at Delta Center; (21) Myra Irving Tanner, retired teacher; (22) Thomas Waltrip, physician; (23) Patricia Hayes Drumm, homemaker; (24) Manuel Drumm III, city attorney; (25) W. P. Sappenfield II, graduate student; (26) Cathleen Carpenter Bowman, homemaker; (27) Max A. Heeb, surgeon, School Board president and divisional director of School of Medicine Alumni for the Mizzou Alumni Association.

is in Missouri's Bootheel, some 265 miles from Campus. More southern than midwestern in attitude, architecture and culture, the area (and some of its people) grew rich on cotton. It's sometimes said that more millionaires used to live there than in any town of comparable size in the country. Sikeston is still predominately an agricultural community.

More than 200 alumni are Sikestonians. "They're probably your leading citizens, when it comes right down to it," Charlie Blanton, BSBA '56, president and business manager of *The Daily Standard*, says.

Five of the doctors, 20 of the lawyers, and four out of five of the veterinarians are alumni. Sixty-eight school teachers and administrators have degrees from the University or have taken classwork on Campus, by correspondence or through extension. Sikeston's first black mayor, Don Fulton, has a master's from Mizzou. Other alumni are businessmen and women, homemakers and farmers, bankers and managers of the city's leading industries.

And Sikestonians are still coming to Mizzou — about 50 students are currently enrolled.

But students and alumni are only a part of Mizzou's impact in Sikeston.

Mizzou is carried to the people of Sikeston, as well as to other towns — large and small — across the state. Professors on extension assignments from almost every school and college on Campus go to Sikeston to teach, do research and give good advice. If they don't go in person, they go on video-tape, or their voices go via telephone hookups, or their publications go.

Delta Center, Mizzou's largest agriculture research facility, has had an immeasurable effect on all aspects of agriculture in the area. In the Bootheel, some 5,000 commercial farmers of a potential 6,500, attended meetings on agricultural subjects last winter.

"You can almost drive down the road and pick out the farmers that utilize the University and those who don't," says Robert Matthews, a prominent farmer.

And extension personnel in the county with close ties to Campus provide additional resources for 4-H Clubs,



Children at the Sikeston Child Development Center play outdoors at recess. Staff members at this and other social service agencies, such as the Job Skills Center, have received training on Campus and from area extension personnel, which helps them do a better job.



Robert S. Matthews, left, whose family has farmed its rich land on Sikeston ridge continuously for 115 years, takes a look at a cotton field with one of his farm managers. Matthews is an outstanding example of the many area farmers who have worked closely with researchers on seed development, production and crop diseases at Delta Center, Mizzou's largest agricultural research facility, located in Portageville. For two decades, Matthews has had a close personal relationship with Dr. W.P. Sappenfield, BS Agr '48, PhD '52, of Delta Center. His cotton research, Matthews says, "is what's enabled us to continue to grow cotton in this area. There's an enormous dollar value in what the center means to the Bootheel."

Fire Chief Vernon Morris, right front, many of his firemen and volunteers have received training through Mizzou's Institute of Public Safety. The institute also has conducted basic police training in Sikeston since 1969. Seven police officers have received certificates for 250 hours of classroom work; 20 more are enrolled. Mizzou provides from a fourth to a half of the all police training in Sikeston.



Mizzou students come from every county in the state; about half of each entering freshman class is from the metropolitan areas of Kansas City and St. Louis. Posing in front of the "Sikeston columns" are some of nearly 50 Sikeston students currently enrolled at Mizzou. Front, kneeling: Missy Shackelford, pre-journalism; Prince McDougal, biology; Lisa Edwards, arts & science; Greg Colwick, business; Mary Sikes, business; Laura Keenan, marketing; Chuck Medelberg, biology; Kathy Grojean, accounting. Standing: Teresa Houshin, elementary education; Karen Patterson, nursing; Jennifer Drumm, journalism (Jennifer was 1975 Homecoming Queen); Randy Rakestraw, pre-business; Leslie Cox, agriculture; King Sidwell, JD '76; Anne Sikes, fashion merchandising; and Charlie Scott, who's in business.



Artist Anne Rowe's painting of a unicorn decorates her porch. She's also interested in sculpture and recently took a course in Sikeston taught by Assistant Professor Jim Froese of the Mizzou art department. "I know now how *not* to do sculpture," Rowe admits.





homemakers, students and farmers.

Helping to provide quality health care are several other Mizzou projects. A new federal grant, administered through Mizzou, will provide \$14,000 a year for renal dialysis. Mizzou helped establish and sponsor coronary intensive care classes for nurses at the community hospital. Emergency ambulance medical technicians receive 91 hours of training in a program sponsored by Mizzou. A rehabilitation nursing workshop, taught by 18 Mizzou faculty members, was held last fall.

This summer, a couple of Mizzou students were among those enrolled in a speed reading and comprehension class; teachers learned about the law from local attorneys; and parents found out how to help their children learn through play.

In recent months, Sikeston residents have taken self-supporting classes in Real Estate Appraisal, Interior Design and Flower Arranging (taught through videotapes prepared on Campus).

Officials in local government, real estate and financial institutions participated in a seminar on the national flood insurance program last March.

Mizzou is helping people update their job skills, and enjoy their leisure through these and many other classes. The impact on health care, the quality of public services and the individuals who gain in knowledge is not something that can be measured, but it is significant. This is education for today and tomorrow.

But Sikeston and Mizzou also are mindful of the need to preserve the cultural heritage of yesterday. At the Lilbourn Site, a large fortified Mississippian Indian ceremonial center near Sikeston abandoned about 500 years ago, excavations have been going on since 1969. The project is directed by Dr. Carl Chapman from Mizzou.

"Much of the support for this work has come from people in Sikeston," Chapman says. Harryette Campbell, AB '48, and Edward Matthews have been particularly helpful and organized the Southeast Missouri Archaeological Society, he says.

Mizzou is doing lots, 'way down south in Sikeston . . . and in Springfield and Kansas City and Joplin and Chillicothe and St. Louis and St. Joe and Trenton and . . . □



Twins Jan Ellen, left, and Clarence Edward Felker IV "were very lucky to survive," their mother believes. Born about 20 weeks prematurely in Sikeston, they were flown to Columbia for care at UMC's Medical Center.

Tree planting was a recent project of the Sikeston 4-H Club, a group of 75 youngsters, led by president Michele Manning. Most state leadership for 65,000 4-Hers comes from Mizzou, site of the annual state meet.