

MIZZOU

The magazine of
the Mizzou Alumni Association

[Home](#) » [Summer 2012](#) » [Around the Columns](#) » [Turning point](#)

Around the Columns

Turning point

Mizzou has helped launch several successful show-business careers, including the likes of Jon Hamm, Sheryl Crow, Tom Berenger and George C. Scott. And on March 4, 2012, the newest member of this elite group, Academy Award-winning filmmaker [Dan Lindsay](#), BS BA '01, stood on the Jesse Hall stage posing with an Oscar that he and fellow director T.J. Martin had won just weeks before. The film, *Undefeated*, which headlined Columbia's True/False Film Fest, is a documentary coming-of-age story about players on a poor Memphis high school football team. A packed house applauded Lindsay and Martin's new life in the media spotlight.

Lindsay's life had leapt ahead once before under the proscenium at Jesse. As a student in 2001, he rekindled his interest in entertainment while preparing a Greek Week skit with his Beta brothers. "We won the competition, and I remember sitting outside on the stairs with my friends. And we were like, 'We're all going to move to L.A., and we're going to do this [show business]!' I was the only one who did."

Lindsay got his start in filmmaking as part of his "only one" strategy for getting good grades. As a grade-schooler in Rockford, Ill., an English assignment allowed students either to write a paper or make a film. "I thought, make a movie, that's easy. From then on, I would always ask my teachers if I could do that. I could sum up World War II in three minutes. I'd always get an A because I was the only one who did it. I thought, 'This is a racket,' I can get into this."






On the Jesse Hall stage, Dan Lindsay poses with an Oscar that he and fellow director T.J. Martin had won just weeks before for the film *Undefeated*. Photo by Rachel Coward

For most of Lindsay's time at MU, he studied accounting, and show-biz took a back seat. Then during his senior year, Ragtag Cinema opened downtown. It was the first time he lived in a town with an art house theater and the first time he saw a documentary (*The Eyes of Tammy Faye*) on a big screen. "That changed my life," he says. He frequented Ragtag, took some theater courses with Jim Miller and others, and joined the Greek Week production. Soon he was back in the mode of making entertainment.

A decade passed before Lindsay and Martin landed in Memphis and spent nine months recording 500 hours of footage of football players and coaches. "A year ago we were in our editing room working on this film, literally not knowing if anyone would ever see it," Lindsay says.

But they showed *Undefeated* at the South by Southwest film festival and sold it on the night of its premiere after a bidding war. Then the prestigious Toronto International Film Festival called and wanted *Undefeated*. Then they were on the short list for the Oscars. And won. "This is a massive growth time for me not only professionally, but personally and emotionally," Lindsay says. "The experience has allowed me to appreciate opportunities I've had in my life in a way that I might not have done before."

[More 2012 Around the Columns »](#)

 [Follow us on Twitter](#)  [Join us on Facebook](#)  [Subscribe to our feed](#)

Published by MIZZOU magazine, 109 Reynolds Alumni Center, Columbia, MO 65211 | Phone: 573-882-5916 |
E-mail: Mizzou@missouri.edu

Opinions expressed in this site do not necessarily reflect the official position of MU or the Mizzou Alumni Association.

Copyright © 2021 — Curators of the [University of Missouri](#). All rights reserved. [DMCA](#) and other [copyright information](#).

An [equal opportunity/affirmative action](#) institution.

Last updated: Feb. 15, 2013