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Around the Columns

Taking care of graduating

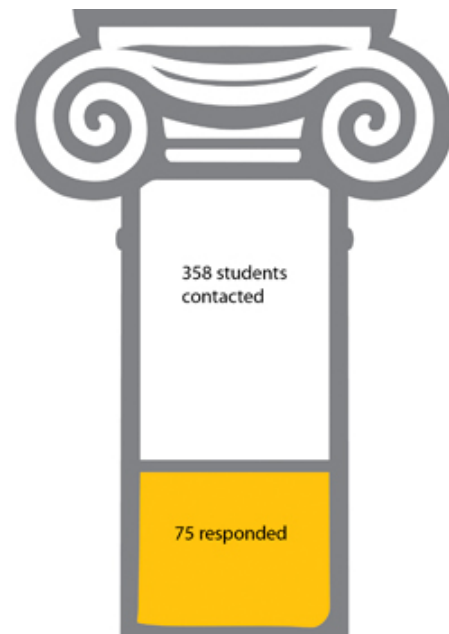
Wright is on a mission to help people finish what they started at MU. With a program informally called Recruit Back, she locates people who dropped out having earned more than 100 credit hours with a grade-point average of 2.0 or better. Then she connects them with people across campus who can help them complete their degrees.

Wright retired in 2007 as head of advising for MU's College of Arts and Science and now coordinates the Recruit Back project. It is funded by a \$25,000 grant from a Missouri Department of Higher Education program designed to reduce loan default by increasing graduation numbers. "I like working with students and watching their successes," Wright says. The grant money also funds a student assistant, currently senior economics major Adam Swadley of Battlefield, Mo., who answers mail and crunches numbers about the program.

Swadley says the statistical analysis he performs is "a good hands-on application" of his course work. He also gets to help people such as one woman he contacted who thought she had graduated but had not turned in the correct paperwork. Recruit Back advisers helped her snag that diploma.




The program's resources are available to all students, and its team members offer moral support.

"We decided at Mizzou that a lot of the reason students leave is they don't know one-on-one help is available to them," Wright says. "What we would really like to do is catch students the minute they drop out and help them right away."



Since the program's inception, three students have graduated, eight have re-enrolled and 64 are making plans for graduation.

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