

Lion alumni spring forward to help



It has never been more amazing to be a part of the Missouri Southern Alumni Association than it has these past few weeks. Lion pride came through in such a variety of ways they cannot all be listed in this brief column. But, I will try to convey some of the ways our alumni and friends pulled together to help our neighbors in need in the immediate hours and days following the crisis.



Facebook became the Alumni Association's main communication source with our alumni and constituents, as phone lines and email access remained very limited. We received countless inquiries of "How can I help?" as well as offers of volunteer services and donations needed during the aftermath of the tornado through the Alumni Association.

Alumni from far and wide joined in efforts to assist with collecting monetary donations for the Tornado Emergency Relief Fund. They sent truckloads of donations to the Joplin outlets for in-kind gifts and gathered troops of volunteers to help with debris removal in the town.



Alumni from outside the Joplin area simply showed up to help — some of which we were able to see and work with on campus, and so many more we know who came to town, quietly helped out and went back home without ever having checked in with our office to say hello or ask for any recognition at all.

In our fall magazine, we will attempt to list those that we know helped us in this effort, but we also know that so many of our alumni will never be fully recognized for their selfless efforts during those first, difficult days.

Several of our MIAA partner Alumni Associations have collected funds for the MSSU Tornado Emergency Relief Fund to support faculty, staff and students who were impacted by the tornado. It was a humbling and awesome experience to receive one of the first emails from our counterparts at other universities asking what they could do or where they could send funds to help our community. We are very grateful to these friends of ours who do not wear the green and gold, but come together as one during a time like this.

On behalf of the MSSU Alumni Association Board of Directors, please let me extend to all of these "anonymous alumni" our heartfelt thanks for everything that has been done to help us get to this point in our recovery efforts. We are very proud of the committed response of the many Missouri Southern alumni who were able to assist in all ways possible in all efforts during this crisis. You truly have shown us your commitment and dedication to your alma mater and to the areas in and around Joplin, Missouri, that have been affected by this horrendous event.

— Lee Elliff Pound, '86, Alumni Director



EFFECTS OF THE MAY 22, 2011, TORNADO

- 158 people lost their lives from injuries related to the storm, as of June 27.
- 4,000 approximate number of residences with major damage or destroyed.
- 3,000 approximate number of residences with minor/negligent damage.
- 400+ businesses affected by the tornado.
- 3,032 approximate number of people who were served overnight at the Red Cross shelter in Leggett & Platt Athletic Center before it closed on June 12.
- 73,926 approximate number of meals served at the shelter before it closed.

Sources: City of Joplin, American Red Cross, Joplin Area Chamber of Commerce

MSSU Foundation A note from the director

Missouri Southern steps up to tornado's challenge

May 22, 2011, was a day that changed Joplin forever. The devastation wrought by this EF-5 force of nature was horrendous and could clearly have been a knock-out blow to our community. However, the heart and will of the people in and around the Joplin area and those who came to our aid from the region, state, nation and world have ensured that nature's force will not have the last word here.

In terms of Missouri Southern's impact, the tornado touched the lives of more than 180 students, faculty and staff members. We were saddened that one faculty member, Dr. José Alvarez, and one student, Abraham Khoury, were killed, in addition to staff member and '06 alumna Bethany Lansaw's spouse, Don. Four other individuals connected to the University were injured. Fortunately, many lives were spared, although severely impacted. To date, we know that, within our campus community, 129 homes were destroyed, and 100 cars were destroyed or damaged. Some students lost jobs because their employers' businesses were lost.

In the midst of this terrible tragedy Missouri Southern State University was ready, willing and able to respond. The University had just signed a Memorandum of Understanding with the Red Cross on April 28, 2011, to provide a shelter from natural disasters. At the signing ceremony, officials expressed the hope that this agreement would never have to be implemented. Unfortunately, Joplin's great disaster was merely days away. However, MSSU stood ready to become a robust partner in the tornado relief efforts. Our campus housed the



President Barack Obama hugs Betty Corbin while Mary Davis, '70, looks on after the memorial service May 29 in Taylor Auditorium. Corbin lost her home and Davis's was severely damaged by the tornado. Missouri Gov. Jay Nixon (left) greets Corbin's grandson, Shaun Buck, '11, Southern sports information intern. — Courtesy, official White House photo

main Red Cross shelter at Leggett & Platt Athletic Center and a "surge medical clinic" at the new Health Sciences Building. AmeriCorps set up an administrative and staging area for volunteers, which is still operating on campus just south of Fred G. Hughes Stadium. Hundreds of first responders lived in our residence halls, as the Missouri National Guard mobilized to help. And locations were set up for meetings arranged by Missouri Gov. Jay Nixon, for venues for meetings with tornado victims by FEMA, SBA, State of Missouri departments and agencies, and, of course, the Memorial Service on May 29 at which President Barack Obama spoke.

While important and even critical, the use of MSSU's facilities for the tornado response does not tell the whole story. The real story was the selfless and tireless efforts dedicated to the disaster response by Southern employees. From across the campus in areas such as physical plant, technology, food service, residence halls, public relations, advancement, athletics, as well as faculty and administration, MSSU

employees stepped up and went over and above their normal work schedules and duties to provide for those whose lives had been so tragically changed. Over and over again, I personally witnessed Southern's "quiet heroes" getting the job done without fanfare or need of recognition. I was proud to be affiliated with such big-hearted and hardworking colleagues who knew MSSU was uniquely able to serve this community in its great hour of need.

As our employees served in the disaster response, the Foundation, in keeping with its charter, sought a way to help many students, faculty and staff impacted by the tornado. Thus, we created the

Tornado Emergency Relief Fund at the Missouri Southern Foundation to provide such assistance. The response has been gratifying, and we have received gifts from across the nation and the world. At the same time, we created a committee of student, faculty and staff representatives to help evaluate the applications for assistance and make decisions on grants. Initial emergency relief grants are expected to be distributed by June 30 with a second round to be at a future time.

To join in giving to support our students, faculty and staff, please follow the instructions (at the right) on how to make a gift. A gift of any amount will be helpful support to these friends and colleagues who clearly need our support at this time. The MSSU family has already done so much for the community, and through this fund, we are helping our people on their journey of recovery. Thank you for your consideration and support!

— Dr. Mark Parsons, VP for Development and Executive Director, Missouri Southern Foundation

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STATEMENT OF PURPOSE

crossroads magazine is the official alumni publication of the Missouri Southern State University Alumni Association. The mission is to serve its readers by providing information of interest about the University, its alumni and the Alumni Association and by acting as a channel for Missouri Southern alumni as a "connection for life" with the University.

crossroads magazine is published two times a year by the Missouri Southern State University Alumni Association and the

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crossroads is written and designed by faculty, staff, students and alumni. The views expressed do not represent the student body, faculty, staff, administration or Missouri Southern State University.

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Lions lend a hand Your gift is appreciated

We understand that this special issue of **crossroads** may be delivered to individuals who have lost loved ones, homes, businesses or in some way were affected by the May 22 tornado. Know that you are in the thoughts and prayers of those at Missouri Southern State University. Many people have asked, "How can we help?" One way is to provide support to our students, faculty and staff who have been directly impacted by the storm. The Tornado Emergency Relief Fund will help these individuals as they struggle to reorganize their lives. Thank you for your support.



Missouri Southern Foundation

Tornado Emergency Relief Fund

Yes! I want to help faculty, staff and students impacted by the recent tornado.

Title: _____ First Name: _____ Last Name: _____

Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____

Home Phone: _____ - _____ - _____ Work Phone: _____ - _____ - _____

Email: _____ Amount of Contribution: \$ _____

Please return to: Missouri Southern Foundation, 3950 E. Newman Road, Joplin, MO 64801

You can also donate online at www.mssu.edu/giving

100 percent of funds go directly to people in need — no administrative or other costs are deducted!
All donations stay local!

Would you like to volunteer?

Help the Joplin area rebuild. AmeriCorps is staged on Missouri Southern State University's campus.
To find out more about volunteer opportunities, please call 417-625-3543.

Signs of hope signal resilience of people in the Joplin area to rebuild

On May 22, 2011, an EF-5 tornado struck Joplin and Duquesne in Missouri. The total path of destruction was almost 13 miles long and from one-half to three-quarters of a mile wide. The storm destroyed or severely damaged homes, schools, churches and businesses, including St. John's Regional Medical Center. Joplin High School was destroyed, and the school district will relocate almost 54 percent of its students for the 2011-12 school year. Missouri Southern State University was just 1.5 miles north of the tornado's path as it cut through Duquesne. While Joplin and the surrounding area will be forever changed after this storm, which claimed at least 158 lives as of June 27, the resilience and determination of the people remains strong as we rebuild. Southern is proud to be a partner in this rebuilding process. The fall issue of **crossroads** will feature students, faculty, staff and alumni and their stories related to the storm and its aftermath. If you would like to share your story with us, please send an email to AlumniAssoc@mssu.edu.

