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Glassdoor, the online job-hunting service, recently compiled a list named “25 Best Jobs in America for 2015.” Several of the career paths on the list are rooted in majors found at WKU and other universities.

Glassdoor composed the list on three primary factors that included, earning potential based on average annual base salary, career opportunities rating and number of job openings, according to the website.

While there were some medical careers included, the majority of the list remained concentrated in the business, marketing and engineering departments.

“I think the list is reflective of what always tell students,” Richard Sham-horn, the chair of Marketing and Sales at WKU, said. “The biggest advantage of marketing is that it’s extremely flexible. It’s everywhere. You can go in any direction with it. Everybody is selling something.”

Today’s economy is evolving at a rapid pace, and jobs are subsequently being a prime example of the continued importance of social media and the internet.

“The presence of social media cannot be ignored,” according to Michael Ford, a Hodgenville senior in the marketing and sales department. He said that sites like Groupon, where individuals create and independently sell products online, are a prime example of the continued importance of social media and the internet.

Paula Potter, the chair of the Department of Management, is excited to see more management positions on the list.

“We say you can go into so many fields because in every aspect there will be someone who needs a manager,” Potter said. “From a broader perspective, there are so many jobs (on the list) that are supported by the Gordon Ford College of Business. This bodes very well for our graduates.”

“Kissing Bridge” remains iconic romance spot

Tucked behind Van Meter Hall and Garret Conference Center, there is a small wooden bridge.

Despite its plain façade, the Old Fort Bridge—more commonly known as the Kissing Bridge—has cultivated its own personality during its existence.

Legend says if two students visit the bridge on their first date and have their first kiss there, they’ll be bonded to each other forever, effectively making it the campus Cupid.

For some couples, the bridge’s mythology holds true.

President Gary Ransdell listed the bridge as a key place in his relationship with wife Jille. The couple married in December 1972, during their senior year at WKU and have been together for the 40 years since.

Bridge at Fort Johnston with Cherry Hall in background. Archival photo, 1985.

Gary Harlow/WKU archive

Transit ridership increases due to changes

Parking and Transportation Services made several changes to the Topper Transit system last semester, which resulted in record ridership.

Jennifer Tougas, director of PTS, said transit carried 387,263 passengers in the fall, an increase of 26 percent over last year, at the same time.

Tougas said PTS implemented the changes to make-up for the dramatic loss in commuter parking in the fall, as a result of the rise in housing residents who brought cars to campus.

“I’m happy with the result of the changes,” she said. “Our drive was to improve the situation for commuters.”

Tougas said PTS rearranged parking zones so bus routes would pass by commuter lots.

By Abby Ponder

Glassdoor, the online job-hunting service, recently compiled a list named “25 Best Jobs in America for 2015.” Several of the career paths on the list are rooted in majors found at WKU and other universities. Glassdoor composed the list on three primary factors that included, earning potential based on average annual base salary, career opportunities rating and number of job openings, according to the website. While there were some medical careers included, the majority of the list remained concentrated in the business, marketing and engineering departments. “I think the list is reflective of what always tell students,” Richard Sham-horn, the chair of Marketing and Sales at WKU, said. “The biggest advantage of marketing is that it’s extremely flexible. It’s everywhere. You can go in any direction with it. Everybody is selling something.” Today’s economy is evolving at a rapid pace, and jobs are subsequently being a prime example of the continued importance of social media and the internet. “The presence of social media cannot be ignored,” according to Michael Ford, a Hodgenville senior in the marketing and sales department. He said that sites like Groupon, where individuals create and independently sell products online, are a prime example of the continued importance of social media and the internet. Paula Potter, the chair of the Department of Management, is excited to see more management positions on the list. “We say you can go into so many fields because in every aspect there will be someone who needs a manager,” Potter said. “From a broader perspective, there are so many jobs (on the list) that are supported by the Gordon Ford College of Business. This bodes very well for our graduates.” “Kissing Bridge” remains iconic romance spot Tucked behind Van Meter Hall and Garret Conference Center, there is a small wooden bridge. Despite its plain façade, the Old Fort Bridge—more commonly known as the Kissing Bridge—has cultivated its own personality during its existence. Legend says if two students visit the bridge on their first date and have their first kiss there, they’ll be bonded to each other forever, effectively making it the campus Cupid. For some couples, the bridge’s mythology holds true. President Gary Ransdell listed the bridge as a key place in his relationship with wife Jille. The couple married in December 1972, during their senior year at WKU and have been together for the 40 years since. Bridge at Fort Johnston with Cherry Hall in background. Archival photo, 1985. Gary Harlow/WKU archive Transit ridership increases due to changes Parking and Transportation Services made several changes to the Topper Transit system last semester, which resulted in record ridership. Jennifer Tougas, director of PTS, said transit carried 387,263 passengers in the fall, an increase of 26 percent over last year, at the same time. Tougas said PTS implemented the changes to make-up for the dramatic loss in commuter parking in the fall, as a result of the rise in housing residents who brought cars to campus. “I’m happy with the result of the changes,” she said. “Our drive was to improve the situation for commuters.” Tougas said PTS rearranged parking zones so bus routes would pass by commuter lots.
CRIME REPORTS

- Henderson freshman Aaron Paugh reported the theft of property from his McMicken Hall room on Feb. 2. The estimated value of the stolen property was $450.

- Bowling Green freshman Albert Gazarian was cited for third-degree possession of a controlled substance, possession of alcohol by a minor and violation of curfew for missing at least one curfew. He was not in original container on Feb. 2 at Chestnut Street South lot.

- Peeve Valley freshman Alec Carroll, of Douglas Kent Hall, was cited for possession of marijuana with intent to deliver or dispense and possession of drug paraphernalia on Feb. 2 at Crescent lot.

- Glasgow freshman Alexander Gibson was arrested on Feb. 1 and charged with careless driving and first-offense DUI on Nashville Road and Emmett Avenue.

- An unknown subject left food residue on the seventh floor of the Bemis Lawrence Hall kitchen on Jan. 30, causing food to burn and set off the smoke detector.

TRANSIT

Due to the lack of available parking spaces in main campus commuter lots, some commuters parked at South Campus. According to Marsha Tougas, assistant director of the Parking and Transportation Services, said PTS redesigned the Red Line to stop next to the memorial chapel on campus.

"We're still in the process of planning for pay," she said. "Gary Meszaros, assistant vice president for Business and Auxiliary Services, said PTS is considering several options for long-term parking solutions, including the construction of a new parking structure.

"We are starting to have meetings about potentially building another garage on top," he said. Meszaros said the Crescent lot is a possible site for a new garage, and "PTS is looking into buying property within walking distance of campus to help temporary gravel lots for students to park in, during construction.

"What we're going to need is some missing spaces," he said. "While the building is going on we're going to be missing those spaces. We need a place for students to park while the new garage is being constructed.

Meszaros said PTS is looking at this option in response to focus group discussions and customer responses.

KISSING BRIDGE

"There are a lot of places across campus that are special to us, because we've had money to buy a bridge," Ransdell said. "Dates, for us, were walking around campus and became familiar with the various bridges and the occasional wedding.

"I've been here for 14 years, and I bet me and my wife would probably be a very popular proposal spot," he said. "For as long as it exists, the Kissing Bridge will be who you are and richness."

"That bridge, that's going to be who you are and richness."

"If you kiss on that bridge, that's going to be who you are and richness."

"Even though he transferred to the engineering department, students still visit regularly."
Two charged with murder of WKU student to have court date

BY TROY CRUMBIE

Two individuals accused with the murder of a former WKU student will have their court date later this year.

Dominique Lodhay Wortham, 23, and Adriana Monique Mason, 20, are both charged with the murder of Larry Thomas who at the time was a freshman from Lincoln, Nebraska.

The two appeared separately for their hearings on Monday in Warren Circuit Court. Their trial date is set for Nov. 12 in Warren Circuit Court, according to court documents.

Court records showed the pair were initially charged in May 2014 with murder in the first degree and first-degree robbery. Lodhay Wortham was given $1,000 worth of marijuana to be paid back to Wortham after it was sold. Mason told Davis that Wortham and Mason planned a robbery to steal the money.

The fight ended with a gunshot and a stab wound.

Some might not see a need for the upgrade, but Hughes said security measures should always be looked at.

“It’s likely some people would not see the benefit, but given the long term cost savings of electronic security, the improved security visible to current and potential students and the improved convenience for faculty, staff and students, it would be difficult to formulate a reason not to advance WKU security,” Hughes said.

The winner of the competition will be announced in March.

Students can vote via text, Twitter or online at stanleysafeschools.com.

WKU competing for $200,000 security grant

BY ERIAN BRADLEY

WKU is nominated for a grant from Stanley Security, worth upwards of $200,000 to provide funding for new security equipment on campus.

“The grant will provide opportunity for WKU to receive electronic security hardware to upgrade security measures on 15 to 20 doors on the main floor and outside. Some electronic key fobs, such as the ones used on the Kentucky Street apartments, Access Control administrator, said via email.

The grant would go toward equipment for doors throughout academic buildings on campus.

Access Control will decide which doors receive the improvement, depending on the door openings and needs of the certain passages.

The competition is made through tiers, which is determined by how many students attend universities across the nation. WKU is in Tier 3, with 20,000 students or more.

At press time WKU was in the fourth week.

Davis won’t receive the improvements because Housing and Residence Life feels that the policy it has today is more effective and cheaper.

“Having someone stop at the desk and show his or her ID is the only way to verify that you belong there,” Brian Kuster, HRL director, said.

“Right now the policy is there’s no looking to do… to put that type of access control on doors.”

While electronic key fobs would make accessing doors easier, traditional metal keys and locks are safer, Kuster said.

Some WKU buildings already have some electronic key fobs, such as the Kentucky Street apartments. The apartments have cameras on every floor, unlike dorms, which only have them on the main floor and outside.

According to Kuster, the reason HRL doesn’t want dorms to have key fobs is due to the frequency with which people come and go.

For those unable to attend the full weekend, there will be a keynote panel at 9 a.m. on Saturday. The Technology Media Technology Hall auditorium.

The keynote speaker is Whitney Bumann, a religious studies professor from Florida International University.

“I see the human world-culture, thought, economics, ideas, etc.-as part of the rest of the natural world,” Bumann said on his website.

Those wanting to participate in other parts of the workshop should register by contacting Mukonyora by calling 270-781-4944 or emailing bella.mukonyora@wku.edu.

Two day workshop to take on climate change

BY SHELBY ROGERS

Assorted groups throughout campus are coming together to get the “glocal” and discuss climate change.

The Second Interfaith Workshop on Earth Care will take place the weekend of Feb. 20-21 and features several speakers and student-led panels.

Bella Mukonyora, associate professor of philosophy and religion, said the workshop is dedicated to confronting climate change and is a way to come together and learn.

“It’s for people from different walks of life, the academic and general public,” Mukonyora said.

Mukonyora said groups familiar with climate change will notice it’s mandatory to address it now.

“I’m coming to it having grown up in Africa, where people are victims of climate change rather than those dealing with the agents,” she said. “It’s a global problem with local solutions.”

The two-day workshop is comprised of various WKU and community sponsors, ranging from the biology department to the Christian ministry. Mukonyora said the conference becomes more about how people respond to climate change, although rarely acknowledged, should be noted.

“The problem with global warming is that we haven’t left the first part of Feb. 20-21; we’re not done with it when it’s over,” Mullany said. “We need to make sure that this goes on for longer.”

The keynote speaker is Whitney Bumann, a religious studies professor from Florida International University.

“The human world culture, thought, economics, ideas etc. as part of the rest of the natural world,” Bumann said on his website.

Those wanting to participate in other parts of the workshop should register by contacting Mukonyora by calling 270-781-4944 or emailing bella.mukonyora@wku.edu.

The workshop is expected to have roughly 75 people, and the workshop concludes with a screening of the movie “An Inconvenient Truth” which has sold more than 12 million copies worldwide.

A3
Fish Mooney is the star of Gotham mob scene

When I was in college, I went through six majors. Let me repeat that: in four short years, I went through six majors. And these weren't just any majors: I can honestly say I was_keyed out of every major I took. And I'm not the only one. That's why I feel so strongly that college students shouldn't pick their major—or their path through college—based on the careers they think they want to take to—get a job. It's about being aware of the energy deficit, here are three ways to learn more about Pavlovian conditionings, and the wherewithal to finish your college degree.

—Molly McCaffrey, Ph.D.

OPINION

WUKHHERALD.COM

“Gotham,” just like the scale of the fictional city, is a massive undertaking for DC comic-to-television adaptations. The series follows alternate origin stories for infamous villains like Poison Ivy, the Penguin and the Riddler, while being brought down by legions of minor villains. Among the villains, the rise of heroes like Batman and Detective Gordon, as well as the ever-neutral Catwoman, are explained and connected. Though at first exasperating, “Gotham” may provide viewers with a lens, at times-sinister, history of how one of Gotham began. Gotham is a city of struggle for every- one. The citizens seem to live in a cause system, limited and forced down by their socio-economic standing. For the female characters of Gotham, survival is achieved by any means necessary. The struggle and cost of survival is best displayed by Fish Mooney, a character with no ties to the actual DC universe. Viewers are introduced to Fish in the pilot episode, as she steps up to employ- ees. Fish is proven right off the bat to be untouchable — feared by mobsters and cops alike — as the victim of other being accepted his punishment, despite having police officers present.

As the only female mob boss, Fish is known for her brute force and flawless scheming. Fish is a double minority in Gotham, an older female and a woman of African-American descent. What's more, she has proven, even to the big- gest names in Gotham, to be a vicious force to be reckoned with. Fish built her empire navigating countless alliances, false friends and respected ene-mies in the grimy grungy city of Gotham. Fish, is the latest turn of events, is cast out of the city of corruption. Her season-long co-op that against mob boss Falcone resulted in her eventual capture and exile. Even in defeat, Fish is a force to be reckoned with. She left on her team, she retreated, promising to avenge herself. And that she did, with dozens more credits than I needed). I managed to graduate on time (though I didn't have the wherewithal to finish your college degree.

So for that reason I want to encourage all of you to make sure that you're really getting all you can out of this precious gift of college. It is only one of many gifts you will receive, so be sure you're making the most of it. All in all, every student should listen to their friends. Don't even listen to your parents.
HELP WANTED

City of Bowling Green

CAMP COUNSELORS - Assist with Summer Camp leadership groups; some counselors work with special needs children, teens, & adults. Must be knowledgeable in recreation/sports activities, 15-30 hours per week. May thru August; weekend required. Age 17+. $8.37/hr.

Interested applicants can apply online www.bgky.org/hr/jobs or at the Human Resources Department in City Hall, 1001 College Street, Bowling Green.

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TENNIS INSTRUCTORS - Instructs beginning and advanced tennis lessons. Coordinates and runs tennis activities, 15-30 hours per week; weekend work optional. Sweet 16. $8.37/hr.

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BUY-SELL-TRADE:

Games, DVDs, records! Also: comics, CDs, toys, CCGs, RPGs, more! The Great Escape Records & Comics 2945 Scottsville Rd. (Near Greenwood Mall) 615-782-8092

FOR SALE

One bedroom apartment; 1 block from campus; $420/month. (270) 282-4478.

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ACROSS

1 Six-footer at a Super Bowl party? 2 Leveling wedge 3 Trojan War epic 4 Sailed through 5 Omnipresent instrument 6 For the... temporarily 11 Storage structure 12 Requiring a two-day trip, say 13 Ultrasonic image, perhaps 17 Manage standard operating procedures 18 Guideline for standard operating procedures 19 Go one better than 20 Guideline for standard operating procedures 21 Corn cores 22 Most important 23 Go one better than 24 Old Mideast org. 25 "Papa __ a Rollin’ Stone" 26 Weightlifter’s practice

DOWN

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Life has been nothing short of an enduring battle on a path to betterment for Rosalino Santiago Garcia and his family. The 32-year-old migrant worker from Santa Ana, Oaxaca, Mexico finds himself in Fountain Run, Kentucky, providing for his loved ones nine months of the year, despite being a 72-hour bus ride away from home.

The last time Garcia saw his family was for two short weeks in November, before he headed back north to work in the United States, leaving behind his 21-year-old expectant wife, who will give birth to a baby girl. No longer does he have the opportunity to walk his son, Leandro, to school. The chance to put his youngest son, Josue, down to sleep disappears.

Santa Ana feels the effects of its hard-working migrant class. 80 percent of its working men are migrants, and each make an impact on the local economy when they funnel money they earn abroad back into the community.

Santiago is optimistic that next year, his final year in the tobacco fields, will be his last spent away from his family.

"I'm not able to talk with my family often, so I miss them," Santiago said. "But everything has a sacrifice. Everything you need has a price."

PHOTOS and story BY:

Nick Wagner

TOP: Rosalino Santiago Garcia, 32, of Santa Ana, Oaxaca, Mexico, pushes a leaf-topping rig over a row of tobacco seedlings on May 12, 2014, on a farm near Fountain Run, Kentucky.

LEFT: Rosalino Santiago Garcia, 32, of Santa Ana, Oaxaca, Mexico, gives his son, Leandro, a shoulder-ride home on Nov. 5, 2014. Garcia is taking two weeks off of work from the Kentucky tobacco harvest, returning home to accompany his pregnant wife who is due to have his third child.

ABOVE: Rosalino Santiago Garcia, 32, of Santa Ana, Oaxaca, Mexico, peers out the window of his flight into Chicago on Nov. 2, 2014. Garcia spent 16 hours traveling to his home in southern Mexico.

RIGHT: Salena Garcia Pacheco, 21, rolls up her son Josue’s sleeves, while her husband, Rosalino, holds him.

FOR full STORY AND PHOTOS go to WKUHERALD.com
Auditions give students unique opportunity

BY SHANTEL PETTWAY
NEWS@WKUHERALD.COM

In the past year, WKU brought in notable writers, scientists and musicians as a part of the Cultural Enhancement Series. Now, students have the chance to become a part of that roster.

The series, in partnership with the Kentucky Folklore Program, is holding auditions for its final event, Bluegrass Music and Beyond.

Auditions will be on Thursday, Feb. 12 at the Pioneer Log Cabin on campus. The location coincides with the Bluegrass music theme, as the cabin is the home of the Kentucky Folklore Program, according to Brent Bjorkman, director of the Kentucky Folklore Program and Kentucky Museum Director.

“It's really important not only to talk about the greatness in Kentucky, but also showcase students who play bluegrass on their peers' talents," said Bjorkman. Auditions start at 4:30 p.m. and run until all the talent has been reviewed. There are two to three spots looking to be filled for this event, according to Jack LeLoeur, project coordinator for the Downing Student Conservation Project.

The auditioning groups or solo acts will be given 15 to 20 minutes to perform. Selected acts receive $100 per person, as well the opportunity to meet the notable music acts like Dale Ann Bradley, Kentucky/Wildhorse, Mt. Victor Revue and The Pennyrilers.

“We're looking to see if they're engaging, engaging to listen to, and do they have a repertoire to play the quality of music we're looking for,” Bjorkman said.

The student performers will be open for the musical acts and perform one to two songs per group said Bjorkman, but the amount of play time is still to be determined.

The Cultural Enhancement Series and the Kentucky Folklore Program felt it was important to offer the opportunity to students to showcase their talents to the campus. The Bluegrass Music and Beyond concert will be held on South Lawn, Thursday, April 16.

BACKGROUND SERIES

The new director of the Kentucky Museum at WKU on Jan. 1 after Dr. Brent Björkman was named interim director of the Kentucky Museum of Art and Craft in June 2014, held the title of director on Jan. 1 of this year.

He had been away from the Bowling Green area for several years, moving back in the summer of 2012 when the Kentucky Folklore Program decided to come to WKU.

“It was a perfect opportunity to come back to the region, back to Bowling Green, back to Kentucky and back to WKU,” Bjorkman said.

As a folklore graduate student, Bjorkman has always had strong ties with the Kentucky Museum. He said he wrote his first grant to bring the Kentucky Arts Council program to the museum during his time as a graduate student. Now, as director, he has even larger things he wishes to accomplish.

“I really want the museum to succeed,” Bjorkman said.

See Museum Page B2

KY Museum looks to gain popularity under new director

BY ANDREW HENDERSON
NEWS@WKUHERALD.COM

Björkman served as interim director of the museum during the fall semester of last year and acquired the title of director on Jan. 1 of this year.

He has even larger things he wishes to accomplish.

“I really want the museum to succeed,” Bjorkman said.

The Cultural Enhancement Series and the Kentucky Folklore Program felt it was important to offer the opportunity to students to showcase their talents to the campus. The Bluegrass Music and Beyond concert will be held on South Lawn, Thursday, April 16.

The student performers will be open

BLUEGRASS MUSIC AND BEYOND

The student performers will be open for the musical acts and perform one to two songs per group said Bjorkman, but the amount of play time is still to be determined.

Auditions will be on Thursday, Feb. 12 at the Pioneer Log Cabin on campus. The location coincides with the Bluegrass music theme, as the cabin is the home of the Kentucky Folklore Program, according to Brent Bjorkman, director of the Kentucky Folklore Program and Kentucky Museum Director.

“We're looking to see if they're engaging, engaging to listen to, and do they have a repertoire to play the quality of music we're looking for,” Bjorkman said.

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FOCUS ON BLUEGRASS

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Many students wish they knew a faster way to take notes or a more effective way to study. The Literacy Center, located in Tate Page Hall, and its program, College Reading Success, wants to help improve those skills. According to student input, the Center has been created because of this need among college students to have assistance in helping them earn higher grades, she said. "Some students have issues with the high volume of reading, the pace with which readings are assigned, or a high reading vocabulary that they have trouble understanding," said Kristy Logsdon, Literacy Center's instructor, said. "With the strategies we offer were instrumental in helping them earn higher grades," she said.

According to the ALIVE Center for Community Partnership, the Literacy Center provides individualized diagnostic evaluations and intervention for students in the first through 12th grades, along with adult learners. The number of students at each session varies depending on the topic, but some sessions have had more than 60 students in attendance.

"I think he's doing good," Puligundla said. Christy Spudock, Kentucky Museum Education curator, agreed with Puligundla’s thoughts. She said Bjorkman is the perfect man for the director position. "Brent is just outstanding at seeking out partnership opportunities," Spudock said.

She said that Bjorkman will aid the education department in its endeavors and help them in getting more funding for their programs. She continued saying that Bjorkman will help with the overall outreach of the museum into the community.

"He's very dedicated to those inclusion ideas," Spudock said. According to the ALIVE Center, Bjorkman is striving towards greater visibility and attendance for the museum. "I'd love to have the Kentucky Museum as a destination," he said.

To help the museum become more of a destination, he has been working towards gallery exhibits that connect with WKU’s current “Year Of” program, with the focus being the “Year of Ecuador.” Bjorkman said that on Monday, Feb. 9, at 4:30 p.m., the museum will host the grand opening of its multimedia gallery exhibit by Ecuadorian artist Oswaldo Guayasamín.

Bjorkman said that this exhibit and an exhibit planned for next semester with the “Year of South Africa” theme is something he wants the museum to work towards and show how it affects us on a local and international level. "I want to balance the idea of the world as a global society and also how WKU is juxtaposed with the world," he said.

All of these exhibits will be done in hopes of connecting the Kentucky Museum more with the community. Spudock said the museum has done well in the past with community outreach given their limitations, but under Bjorkman, it will improve. "I think the museum will be more connected to the community," Spudock said.

Lynne Marrs Hammer Ferguson, Kentucky Museum artist-in-residence, believes that the aspect of community outreach was cut back in the past, but will be welcomed more now. "A goal will be to mentor collaborative programming with campus groups and the community," Ferguson said. Ferguson said the museum hopes to offer new opportunities for student involvement and be able to get outside of the Kentucky Museum building to offer up opportunities to other locations on campus.

"We want to make sure students know we're here," she said. The Kentucky Museum is open Monday to Saturday from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. and Sunday from 1 to 4 p.m.

**MUSEUM CONTRIBUTED ON FILE**

He said that he’s finding the strengths of his employees and often seeks input for the museum. Bjorkman remarked that he’s currently working with the Kentucky Museum board and the museum is striving towards obtaining accreditation through the American Alliance of Museums.

"It's really just to show you have the superior ability to put on good exhibits — your facility is up to good standards," she said. "We've already been having a positive influence on the museum and, specifically the Kentucky Museum, said Bjorkman who works in the gallery at the Kentucky Museum, said Bjorkman had the most funding for their programs. She continued saying that Bjorkman will aid the overall outreach of the museum is striving with Puligundla’s thoughts. She said that Bjorkman will aid the education department in its endeavors and help them in getting more funding for their programs. She continued saying that Bjorkman will help with the overall outreach of the museum into the community.

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**SOFTBALL**

**SOFTBALL STARTS INAUGURAL C-USA SEASON**

BY JONAH PHILLIPS

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The WKU softball team starts its inaugural Conference USA season this weekend, traveling to Troy, Alabama for the Troy Chick-fil-A Invitational.

Despite C-USA coaches voting WKU to finish fifth in the 12-team conference, the Lady Toppers are the only team from the conference receiving votes in the ESPN.com USA Softball Collegiate Top 25 poll.

"I think it's a reasonably accomplishable task for us to try and get ready for them," Harper said. "Earlier in the year they beat Creighton by about 30. You wonder what they are doing to get us to this point."

"They need to control the things that they can control. If we can do that, we are definitely in the mix," Tudor said. "Everything is on the table for us. It's just a matter of getting the mentality of that we can compete and we can win."

"I think it will prepare us for the postseason," Clark-Heard said. "We are just trying to build off last season and come out strong. I think it has all really come together those past couple of weeks."

Along with the new conference, Head Coach Amy Taylor has been tasked with getting the seven returning players on the same page as the 10 new student-athletes (five of who were added by way of transfer)."

"The older players have done a great job of welcoming in the freshman, and the sophomores and juniors have done a good job of blending with the new," Tudor said. "Everyone here has done a great job of welcoming in the freshman, and the sophomores and juniors have done a good job of blending with the new."
**STAY FOCUSED**

**By Billy Rutledge**

WOMEN'S BASKETBALL

Hilltoppers looking to defend Diddle this weekend

The Lady Toppers go on a road trip to North Texas on Thursday and Rice on Saturday — two enormous tests. The team is more concerned about staying focused than looking at the standings.

The Lady Toppers are tied for first place in the league. The Hilltoppers' first opponent, the Mean Green of North Texas, will try to avenge the loss to the Lady Toppers in the C-USA standings. The Hilltoppers host North Texas on Thursday and Rice on Saturday — two teams that sit ninth and tenth respectively in the C-USA standings. The Hilltoppers are off to a fine place in the league.

Enter the last third of the season, the team is more concerned about staying focused than looking at the standings. Early success has allowed WKU to get there, and everyone wants to beat us. We are the ones with the targets on our backs. So we are now using that as our fuel to go out and play hard every night. The Lady Toppers will follow up their Thursday visit to North Texas with a Saturday trip to Houston to take on Rice (7-12, 2-6).

The coaches are very good with us,” sophomore guard Brandon Price said. “At the same time in three weeks this weekend, starting off in Denton against North Texas on Thursday night.

“We have four games by 15 points or less, and I want to say the other games it has been no more than 15. What that tells you is there are going to be times in the game when they are going to be up and cause a lot of havoc on defense.’’

The Lady Toppers will follow up their Thursday visit to North Texas with a Saturday trip to Houston to take on Rice.

“With the way the teams have been playing, we are just really focused on defense and playing with energy,” junior guard Jazmine Jones said.

The Lady Toppers are 18-4 and I want them to know and understand that,” Head Coach Michelle Clark-Heard said. “At the same time, we need to work to be the very best that we can be, and when you don’t, we can get ourselves into situations like (against Southern Miss).”

Clark-Heard also believes that the matchup against North Texas (2-17, 1-7) will be tough than their record may suggest.

“Senior A’telia Gosea, a Texas native, registered her career-high 40 points against North Texas on Dec. 30, 2012 at Diddle Arena. She scored 57 of WKU’s 71 points in the 71-66 win. She scored 57 of WKU’s 71 points in the 71-66 win.

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