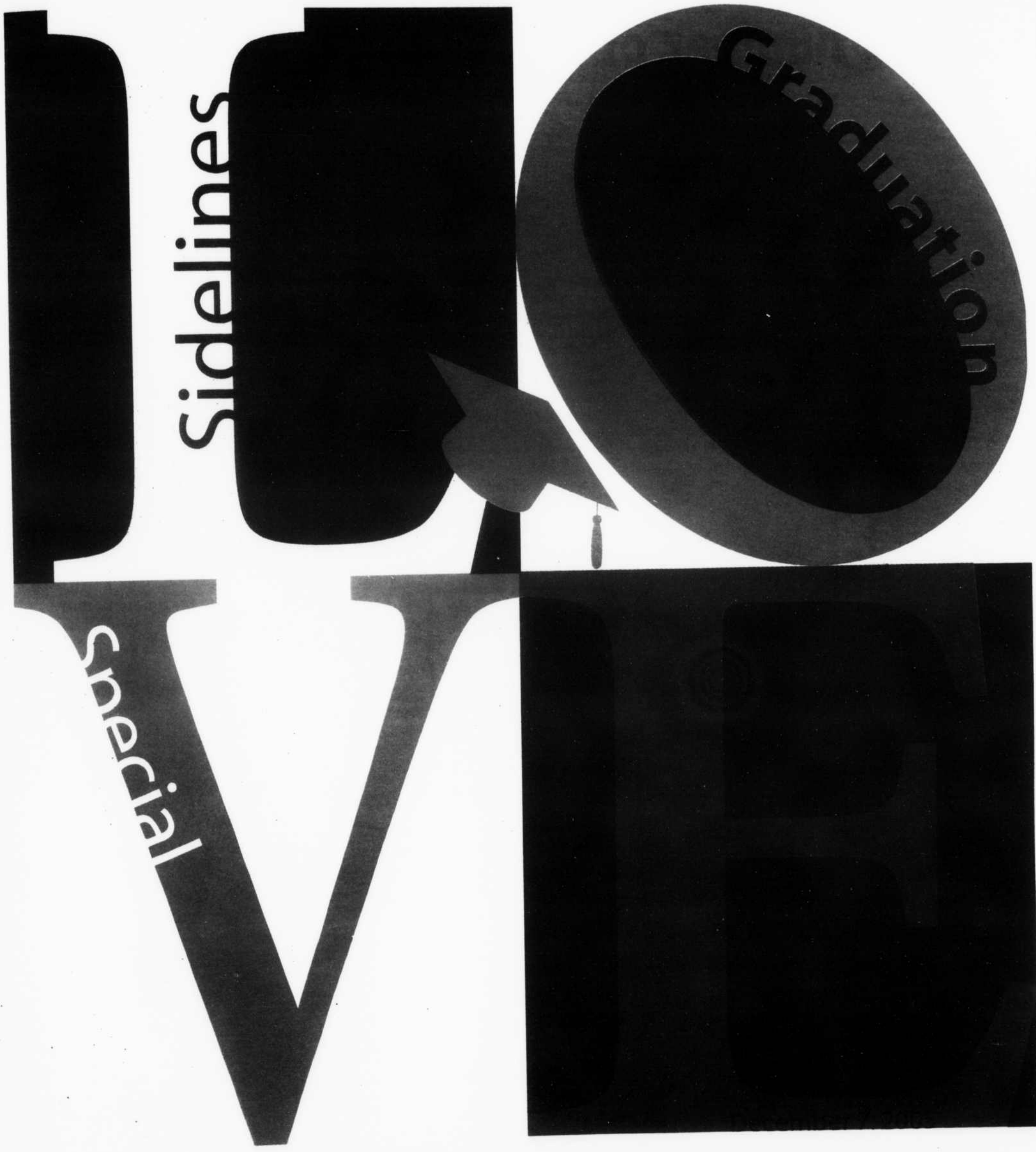


Sidelines

Graduation

Special



Record number of Dec. graduates expected

By Haley Hughes
Staff Writer

A record number of degree candidates are expected to graduate in MTSU's 94th fall commencement on Dec. 17.

Roughly 1,500 candidates will receive diplomas, more than 100 more than graduated last December, said Sherian Huddleston, assistant vice provost for Enrollment Services.

MTSU will again have dual ceremonies, an idea first implemented in May 2005.

"That seemed to go well; students were pleased with being able to invite more than eight people," said Teresa Thomas, director of

Records.

Tickets are not required for attendance this year, so students may invite as many people as they want.

"Since we are having two ceremonies, there should be ample seating for all family and guests, so we have dispensed with the distribution of tickets for guest seating," Huddleston said.

With the dual ceremonies come two guest speakers. The morning speaker will be Emil Hassan, and the afternoon speaker will be Jim Ayers.

"[Hassan is the] former vice president of North American manufacturing, purchasing, quality and logis-

tics for Nissan North America," the press release said. "[He is also] on the board of directors for National Healthcare Corporation, Middle Tennessee Medical Center and the Tennessee Business Roundtable."

Ayers is the founder of the Ayers Foundation, established in 1999, which has helped more than 600 West Tennessee high school students attend college. He also holds honorary doctorate degrees from Freed-Hardeman University and Union University.

Huddleston said she understands the seating capacity of the Murphy Athletic Center

to be 10,000. Both she and Thomas agree that the building will be packed for both the 9 a.m. and 2 p.m. ceremonies.

"Candidates from the College of Graduate Studies, Jennings A. Jones College of Business and College of Education and Behavioral Science will receive their degrees in the morning ceremony," the press release said. "That afternoon, degrees will be conferred on candidates in the College of Basic and Applied Sciences, College of Liberal Arts, College of Mass Communication and the College of Continuing Education and Distance Learning."

Thomas' numbers show the top three colleges with undergrad students receiving diplomas are the College of Education and Behavioral Science with 355 graduates, the College of Business with 330 and the College of Basic and Applied Science with 287.

The MAC will open its doors for the morning ceremony at 8 a.m. and at 1 p.m. for the afternoon ceremony.

Both ceremonies will be Web cast for those relatives and/or friends of graduates who cannot be present at the ceremony and have internet access, Thomas said. Specific details were not available before press time. ♦

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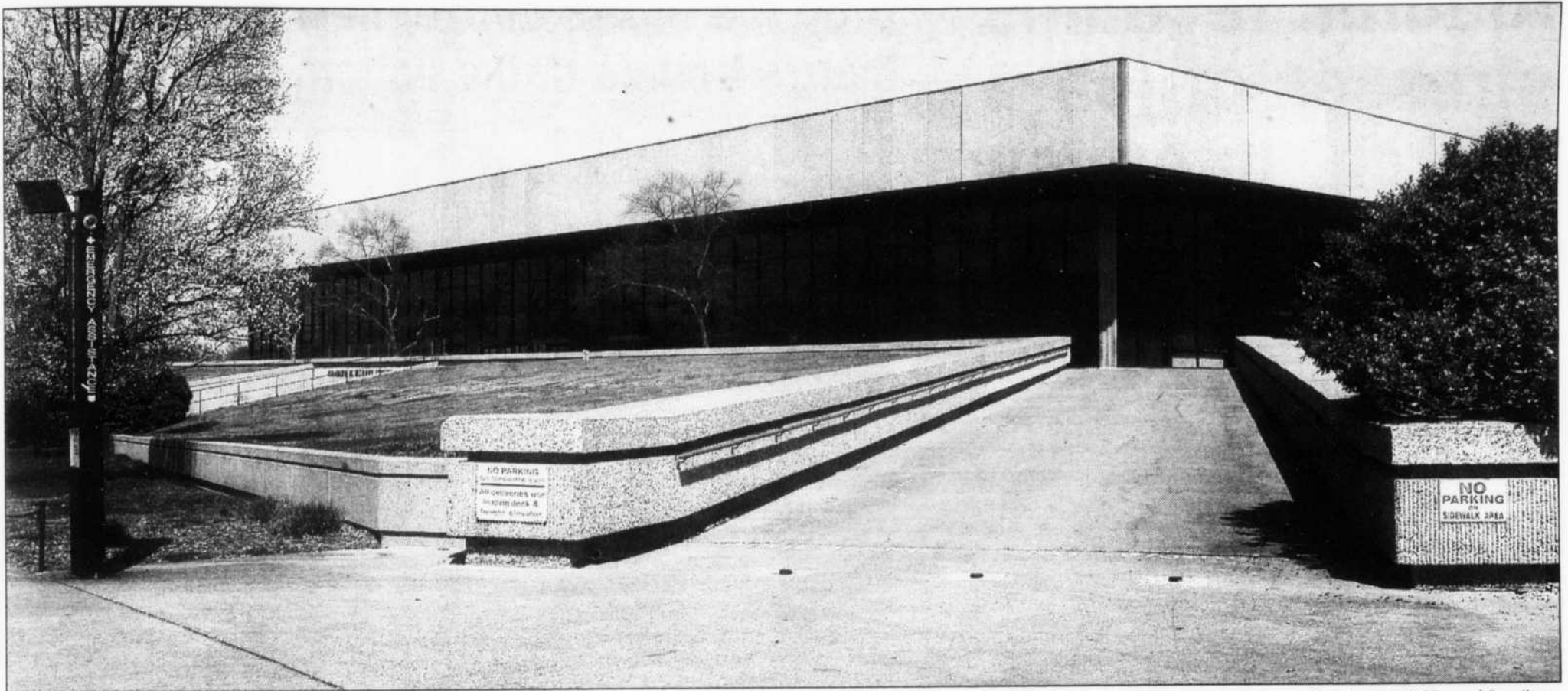


Photo by Rachelle Morvant | Contributor

Murphy Center improvements finish in time for Fall 2005 graduation ceremonies

By Liz Karlson Baker
The Record

Murphy Center has been an important part of MTSU for more than 30 years; from hosting concerts, basketball games and volleyball tournaments to commencement ceremonies, the recognizable round grey building has paid its dues.

Students will notice some changes, however, when they walk across the stage at commencement on Saturday, Dec. 17. They'll see a sea of new blue seats—12,000 of them, to be exact.

"It's a beautiful building and probably is less maintenance than a whole lot of the newer buildings on campus, because it was built so many years ago when quality was really stressed," said Ron Malone, assistant vice president for events and transportation services. "I didn't

have any complaints at all about Murphy Center, even though it's a 30-year-old building—but it was showing its age."

Beginning in summer 2005, the university decided on some major changes: new seating, automatic retracting bleachers and new paint throughout the building. The Tennessee Board of Regents approved the \$1.1 million renovations earlier this year.

Even though the building has held up well through the years, the university decided changes needed to be made, Malone said.

"When you're dealing with things like athletics, for the outside world, even though you might have excellent academics, research, university life and programs that are taking place on this campus, athletics is still for the most part the 'front door,'" said Malone. "And when your

front door doesn't look real good, it kind of detracts from the overall appeal (of the university)."

Blue Raider men's basketball coach Kermit Davis agreed.

"It's the face of the university," Davis said. "A lot of people come to campus to Murphy Center for convocation, commencement, basketball and concerts, so we have the opportunity to give a great impression to recruit students. It's not just an athletic department change, but a whole university change of how everyone perceives MTSU."

Students are also impressed by the new Murphy Center.

"In the past, seeing all those different colors in the building was just this huge eyesore—I mean, they had orange in there!" said graduating mass communication major Michelle Thomas.

"I know when my mom will be taking pictures of me at graduation this year, they are going to turn out great. Every-thing looks uniform now."

Davis added that during the recent Sun Belt Conference Media Day at Murphy Center, coaches, sportswriters and other visitors thought the renovated facility looked "amazing."

"It creates a situation where the others (coaches, players and media) have a sense of urgency to go back and improve their facilities to improve the overall league," he said. "There's no question about it."

Students, teachers, and athletes can now enjoy a newer, more professional building. March 2-7, when MTSU will serve as host for the annual Sun Belt Conference, visitors clearly will be focusing on the Big Blue. ♦

Graduation at a Glance

What: MTSU fall commencement

Who: 1,510 graduates* (1,338 undergraduates, 172 graduate students)

When: Saturday, Dec. 17, 9 a.m. and 2 p.m.

Where: Murphy Center

Speakers: Emil Hassan, former senior vice president for Nissan North America, 9 a.m.

Jim Ayers, chairman and founder of FirstBank and founder of The Ayers Foundation, 2 p.m.

For more info: Call 615-898-2600 or 898-2919 or visit www.mtsu.edu/~records/grad.htm.

* - Approximate as of November 2005

Alumna recounts stresses of job search, interview

By Jessica Nash Hampton
Contributing Writer

Imagine waking up at 6 a.m., five days a week. There's only an hour for lunch, and you can forget your freedom until the 5 o'clock whistle blows.

Yes, it's real life after college. Enjoy sleeping late and picking your own schedule while it lasts. That life will soon be gone, but what emerges later can be even better. You get perks such as living completely dependent on yourself, getting a decent, steady paycheck and most of all, realizing that all those classes you loathed really taught you something.

As I began my last semester of school, I had a lot going on. I was planning for my June wedding, wrapping up construction on our house, taking 16 credit hours, including an unpaid media design internship in Nashville, all while looking for a job fulltime job after graduation. I applied for everything I could. Even if I only met one of the qualifications, I applied. And applied. And didn't get a single call.

Finally, I received the call I had so long been stressing about in early April. It was for a job with a magazine publishing company in Franklin, Tenn. that I found out about through a friend of a friend. I was so relieved about finally getting an interview that I forgot to stress about the actual interview. That is until about five minutes before I walked in the door as I was sitting in the parking lot with sweaty palms looking over my portfolio for the hundredth time.

The interview itself went well. I felt prepared because I had several interviews while pursuing an internship, so I knew the drill.

Everything was going really

well until they said, "We're going to have you do an exercise before you go," and sat me down at a computer and opened up a folder labeled, "test." I felt like I did okay, but I left that day with thoughts looming in my mind.

"Did I take too long? Not enough time? Are they going to discover I really don't know what I'm doing?"

After a week, I got a call back offering me the job. What a relief! Two weeks before school was over and I had a job! They wanted me to start immediately, so I started the Monday after graduation. One week I was taking exams and getting ready to graduate, and the next week I was suddenly working as an advertising designer for a company that publishes more than a hundred magazines.

When I first started, I felt like I didn't know what I was doing. It was discouraging because I quickly realized how much I didn't know. However, as I finished my training and started to get my own projects, the feeling of doubt soon faded and was replaced with a feeling of accomplishment.

As an ad designer, there is a lot of variety designing for many different industries all over the country. I'm getting to learn a lot about design and the production process beyond the classroom.

I've now been working for over four months, and I love it. I really like working for the publishing company. I miss college life, but there comes a time when we have to graduate, move on, and hopefully find ourselves doing something that we enjoy and can be proud of (and hopefully make a little money, too). ♦

Jessica Nash Hampton is an MTSU graduate.

Drop the boss's booze, new graduate; there's trouble at the bottom of that glass

Generally, you're one of two types of graduates:

A) You live in terror worrying that you will never get a job either due to your mediocrity or the particular job market you are going into.

B) You are the overly confident busy bee who will be disappointed by the lackluster job offers that come your way.

My best piece of advice for either type is don't take the first job offer you get.

Allow me a bit of bragging, but I turned down two offers and now I'm working in a job that I didn't expect, but totally love.

So allow yourself some time to think about the decision you're about to make.

In order to do that, I sure hope you have a secret stash of cash. Or do like I did and move back in with your parents. There's no shame in that as long as you make it perfectly clear to your loved ones that you will be getting out of bed whenever you please, thank you very much, Mom.

Seriously, a cooling off period between graduation and your new real life is



Commentary

Kristin Hall
Contributor

truly important. There is a lot of adjustment that you are completely not prepared for.

For one, your concept of time is way too short for the working world. In college, everything is shortened to semesters. You only have to take classes for a few months, bear through all the reading and projects, and then you get to do something completely different next semester.

Once you enter the real world, you'll be doing the same thing every week for freaking years! Once you realize that you have tied yourself down to a job, you'll start to get the twitchy eye when you think about the next 40 years of your career.

But give yourself a couple of months, and your body will adjust and you'll wonder how students can keep track

of their classes.

Also, in the real world, you actually get paid. Salaries mean choices. You have to sign up for an insurance plan, decide if it's too dorky to start contributing to your pension plan, decide if you want overtime or comp time, worry about how much vacation time you have.

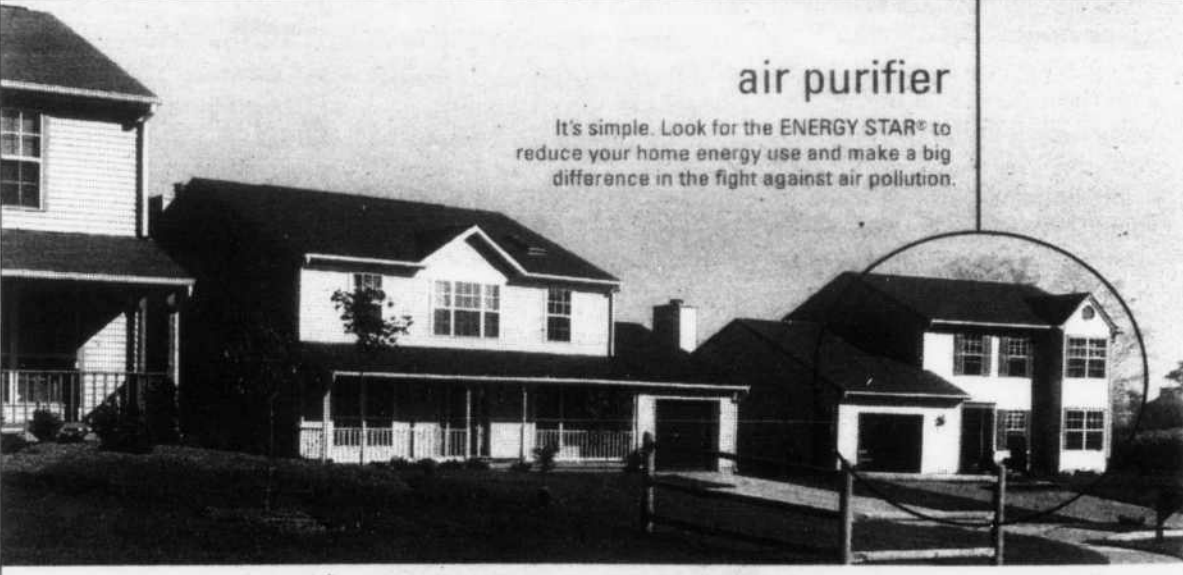
The best plan for young graduates is work like a dog for the first year of your career and you'll have so much comp time that your bosses will beg you to take a week off.

Whatever you decide to do now, you virgin 9-to-5ers, don't ever show up to the big boss' holiday party and drink all his good liquor. That's something you'll regret forever. ♦

Kristin Hall is a reporter for the Associated Press.

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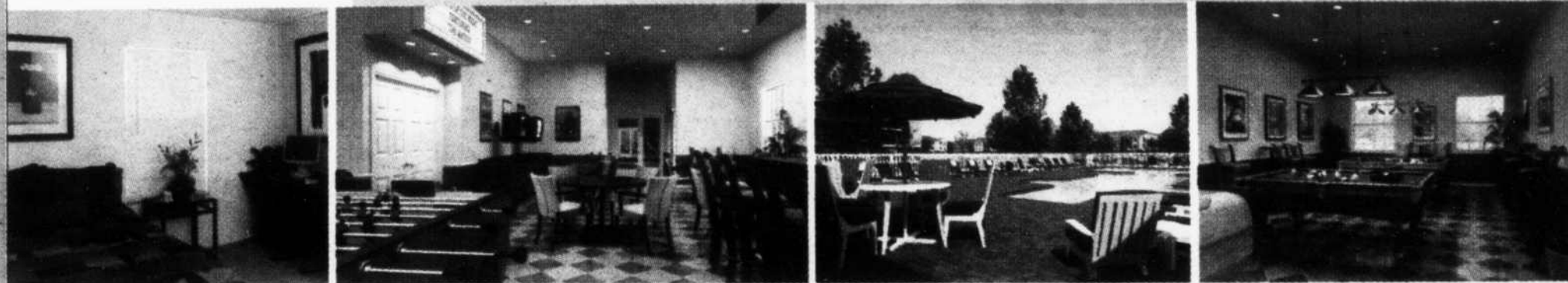
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You don't have to go home, but you can't stay here

When I started college, Bill Clinton was president, Napster had all the music you could stand and no one knew Yoda was so deadly. Although I'm leaving behind good memories, great friends and an underrated McCallie buffet, I'm certainly ready.

As editor of *Sidelines*, I hear a lot of interesting things about myself. If what I'm told is true, I have a grudge against the SGA, the Greeks and Raider Republicans, despite having friends in all three. I use the paper as a personal weapon to carry out my vendettas. And I recently accused each student in a particular department of being bloodthirsty, unforgiv-



Commentary

Matt Anderson
Editor in Chief

ing racists.

The lesson: don't let the man get you down. There's an old Son House song that sums it up nicely:

"Your mother would talk about you, your sister and your brothers too. No matter how you try to live, they're going to talk about you still. So don't you mind people grinnin' in your face."

In other words, keep your head up and keep moving.

I hope most of my fellow December graduates will have cushy, high-paying jobs where they can apply that. For the ones applying at Starbucks after graduation, keep your head up, keep moving.

For the unfortunate souls still working through school, here are a few of the real true facts I've learned about MTSU:

Most professors are lying

when they say you need the book. Do not, under any circumstances, purchase a book until you must use it to complete a homework assignment.

Academic advising is no substitute for a degree audit.

Decisions are made at the pleasure of the administration, then their favorite professors, then other professors. If no one cares and it doesn't cost money, student opinion might matter.

Nothing keeps you safe at night in the Walnut Grove like a good sword cane.

Bureaucracy is cold and unforgiving, but secretaries are lovely people who will always help you if you're

courteous and polite.

There are some amazing opportunities on campus to get experience in your field, including *Sidelines*. Make the most of them, but they are most useful as a stepping stone toward an internship.

Don't worry if you're accused of sexual harassment. You'll be penalized, sure, but Tennessee Board of Regents raises will quickly erase any hit to your salary, and your wife will still be able to afford ridiculous hats. ♦

Matt Anderson is a senior journalism and political science major. He can be reached at manderson614@gmail.com.

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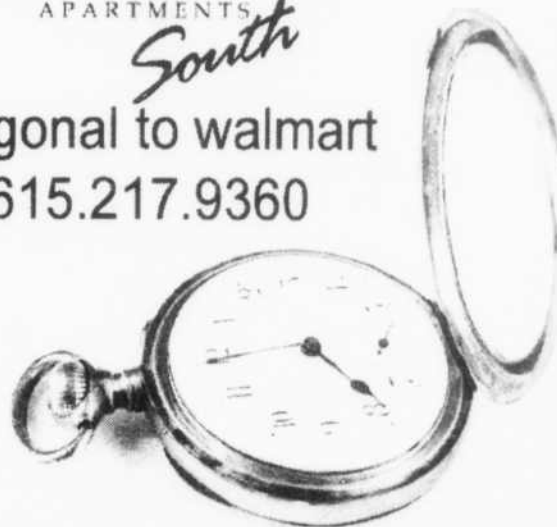
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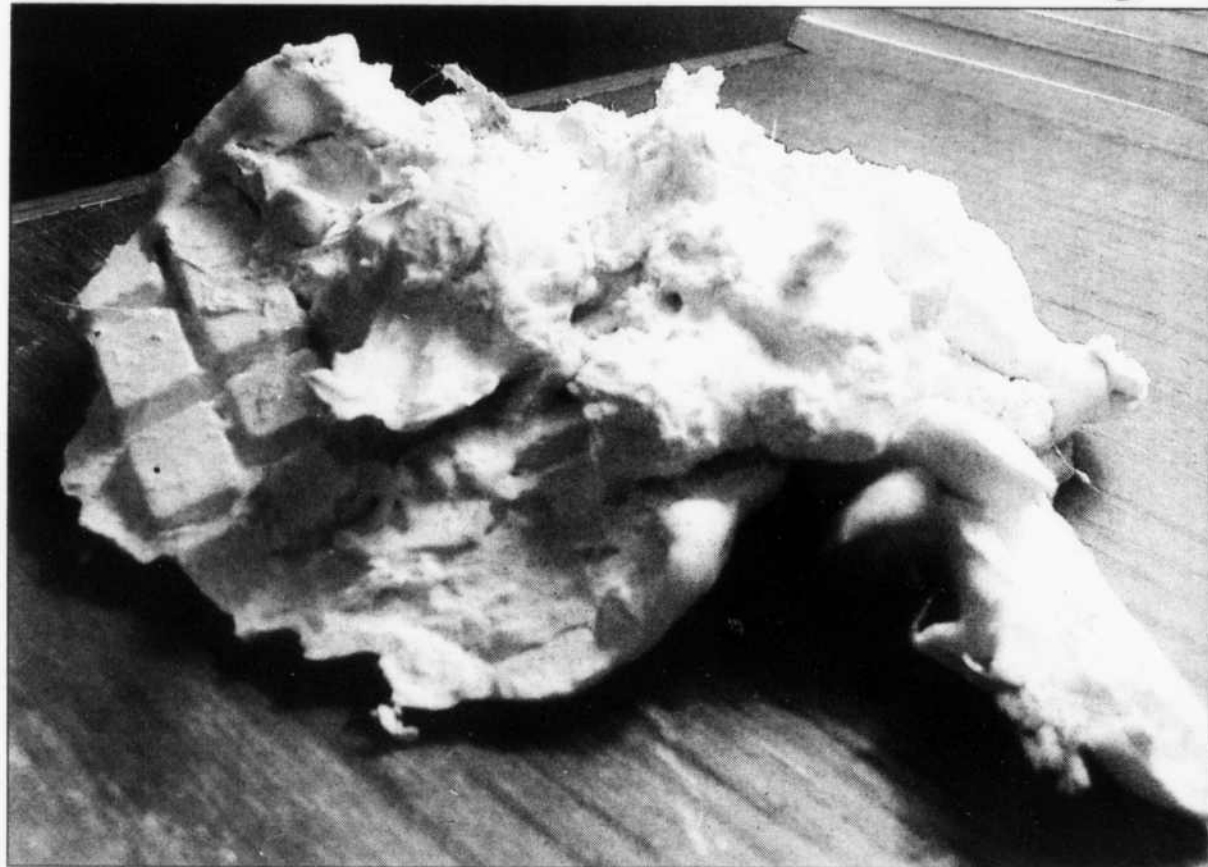
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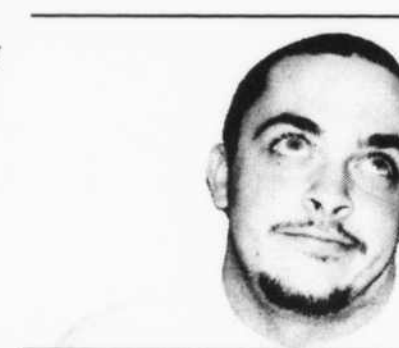
Today during art class we finished throwing together plaster of paris statues. With the end of the year conspiring against us, our grandiose plans of mini-statue of Davids were squelched into some quick and dirty castings and assemblage.

As you can see above, the results are less than spectacular. Even though it has an interesting texture to the outside, it ultimately looks like a constipated trash compacter finally shat out it's clogged innards.

Everybody else's didn't make it out much better, but that didn't matter. While we were sculpting and such, we sang Ray Charles songs. We watched two Japanese guys lip-sing to Backstreet Boys on the Internet. We talked about starting a 3D Design Barbershop Quartet, before realizing that none of us were talented enough singers to do much more than cat screeches.

What makes this sculpture great (besides the fact that I ruined a keyboard by pouring caulk over it) is the experience surrounding it. The statue is ugly, the memory is not.

Unfortunately for MTSU students, the same could be said for



Filler

Brandon Morrison
 Staff Writer

the results of an education here. In many circles outside of the school, and some inside the school, an MTSU degree looks like 3-year-old's scribbling. It's cute to the parent of the child and maybe a few others who are sympathetic, but is probably not going to make it to the MOMA anytime soon.

The time one spends here, though, is what makes the last four years worth it. The series of memorable moments, both good, bad and everything in between, will carry one much further than any piece of sheepskin nailed to the wall.

It's simple really. One day, right before you graduate, you are going to realize that all the things that stress you out right now, the bad neighbors in the apartment next door, the nasty food at the

cafeteria, the girlfriends who don't return your calls, the 20 page papers, it all doesn't matter.

When you get out of here, you are going to see a whole new set of problems that seem daunting and scary. The thing about those problems, though, is that they probably don't matter either.

Don't mistake this for nihilism. There are definitely things in life worth worrying about. It's probably not what you're worrying about, though, especially if it involves cheese whiz, disappearing hats or potted plants.

If it makes you feel any better, though, it's probably not what I'm worrying either. ♦

Brandon Morrison is a senior media design major. He can be reached at webmaster@brandonmorrison.com.



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