

KELLER'S COMEBACK

Quarterback returns to CMU after being shot

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CENTRAL MICHIGAN LIFE

NOV. 11, 2021 || MOUNT PLEASANT, MI



FINALLY AT PEACE

CMU network honors Korean War veteran

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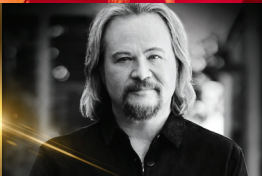
SIBLING SUPPORT

After the death of their father, freshman and her RA brother support each other from one dorm room away



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Lucas Bieganski | Staff Photographer
Threads Fashion students and adviser, pose for a picture on the red carpet, on Friday Nov. 11, at "Threads Fashion: The Elements" event at Hunter's Ale House.

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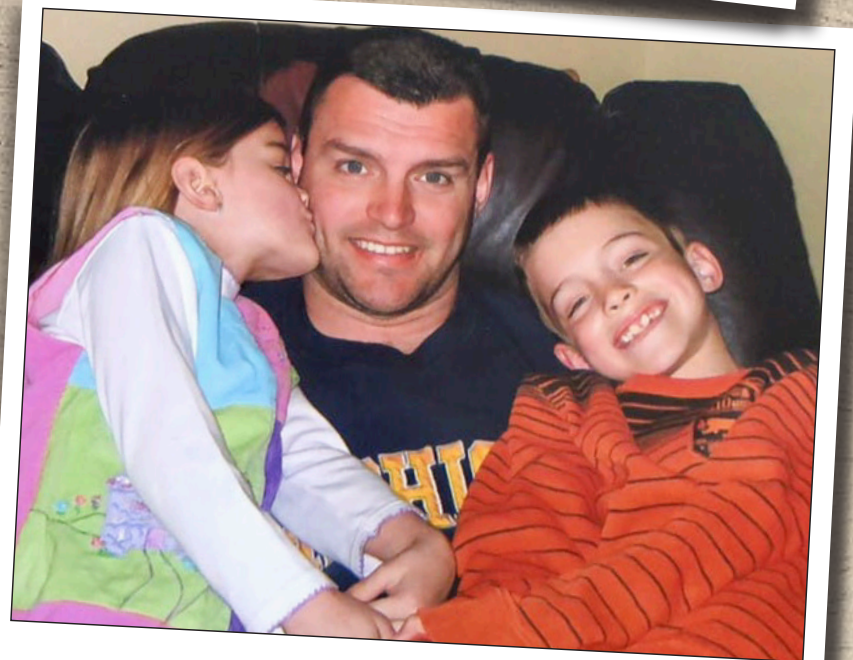
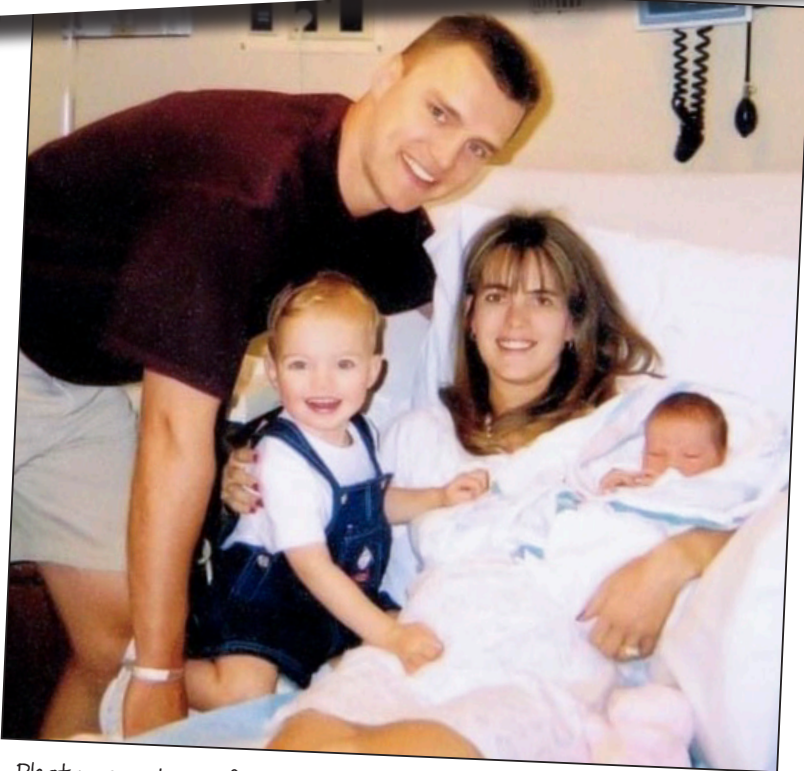
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Photos courtesy of the Fougner family show moments with their late father, Jayeson, who died March 19 of a heart attack.

From home to dorm, still right next door

Siblings support each other through college life and death of dad

By Addy Wachter
Staff Reporter

Sitting in her room trying to focus on her classwork, Waterford freshman Kayly Fougner struggles to finish her assignment. Memories of her dad rush through her head. She reaches out to her brother, Waterford sophomore Hunter Fougner, for support.

Most students would need to call, text or FaceTime their siblings if they need to talk. All Kayly has to do is walk a few feet down the hall and knock on Hunter's door.

Kayly and Hunter's father, Jayeson Fougner, died March 19 of a heart attack. He was 47.

For Hunter, going back to school after his father's death and leaving his mourning family was difficult.

For Kayly, starting college this year without her dad's support — knowing he wouldn't be there to help her through the transition — was difficult.

"When something is taken from you abruptly like that, you just want to hang-on to whoever is closest," said their mom, Kristine Fougner. "When you have siblings going to school together, they wanted to be next to each other."

With the siblings coming back to school this fall and starting a new school year, they thought it would be easier on both of them if they remained close — right next door to each other.

"I think this past year put into perspective how our family is and how important it is to be close with them because you don't know how much time you have with them," Hunter said. "It's good to be close with them at all times and that's one of our main reasons for why we room next to each other."

Kayly said that she and her brother have had a good standing relationship for a while. Everyone comments on how close they are and how they wish they were close with their siblings like they are.

They play video games and board games together and enjoy watching movies. Kayly said that it doesn't matter what they are doing because most things they do together are fun just because they love each other's company.

Sometimes it's hard to find time to hang out but Kayly and Hunter see each



Kayly (left) and Hunter (right) pose for a portrait in their dorm holding gifts that remind them of their dad in Beddow Hall on Oct. 21 in Mount Pleasant.

Addy Wachter | Staff Reporter

other almost every day.

Hunter has been able to help Kayly start off her new school year by showing her around campus, eating meals with her, helping her reach out to new people and showing her how to be successful.

"He is also my RA and that's just another thing," Kayly said. "I feel protected because he's right next to me, so if anything happens I go to him. It's really nice."

Along with helping Kayly through her freshman year as her RA, Hunter has also been there for her when she needed it.

"Just for the emotional stuff, I kind of needed him next to me or I would go insane," Kayly said.

Being at school instead of being with family at this time has been hard on both of them, but they said they know it is best for the two of them to be at CMU.

"Late at night when I am doing assignments and I am feeling hopeless, I get really emotional and I can't believe I am doing this," Kayly said. "I am doing this to make my dad proud and to make everyone around me proud."

Kayly's goal is to go to medical school. She has wanted to be a doctor ever since fifth grade after discovering her love of helping

people and saving lives.

At an early age, Kayly went through endoscopy, a process when doctors send a camera into a person's body to observe. She said the anesthesiologist made her feel safe before going under and now Kayly wants to do the same for other people going into surgery.

Her dad has been supporting her in this goal since the beginning by buying her prep books for the SATs, comforting her if she was crying from frustration and reminding her constantly that he would always be proud of her. Kristine said that she and her husband always told their kids to live life with goals and dreams.

Hunter wants to work in the finance field after college because of the intellectual and monetary rewards along with the ability to support his family with a career in finance, which is Hunter's most important goal.

"We would always have a plan, no matter what it was and if something altered the plan, it would still be executed in a different way, but the goal would still be reached," Hunter said. "I think now he would still want it the same way."

Kristine said she feels better that they are one door away.

"We also need (our mom) at the end of the

day as well," Hunter said. "She still shows us the ropes and helps guide us through life even though things have changed."

Even though she is living alone in Waterford, Hunter said his mother has adapted well. He thinks they have grown closer with her.

"I am two hours away but they know that I will drop everything and come there," Kristine said. "I think they have been using each other to lean on, and that gives me peace."

Kristine said that even before their dad passed away, Hunter was trying to get Kayly to attend CMU because he wanted his best friend with him.

"They've always had each other to lean on, to confide in, simply just to be a best sibling and best friend," Kristine said.

Kayly and Hunter constantly check-in on each other and take care of each other. From living in the same house to now living next door in a dorm, makes things easier.

"They had already talked about how it would be cool if they lived near each other just because they have been best friends for 18 years," Kristine said. "When they lost their dad, they knew they needed each other the most to try to get through life now."



Keller's grateful return

Quarterback, shot in April, begins journey back to the field

By Grace Butler & Mitch Vosburg
Sports Reporter & Sports Editor

Saturday, Sept. 11, 2021.

Sophomore John Keller exits the Chippewa Champion Center and steps onto the field at Kelly/Shorts Stadium. As the sun shined on the CMU quarterback donning his maroon No. 8 jersey, he walks to the sideline with obvious excitement. Not only was it the Chippewas home opener against Robert Morris, but it was Keller's first CMU game with fans in the stands.

To many CMU football fans, Keller's appearance might seem insignificant. But to Keller, his family and friends it was the beginning of a new chapter. They couldn't have been happier to see him back on the field, especially after the emotional, physical and mental journey he had endured for the past four and a half months.

Keller's life changed in an instant on the night of Friday, April 24 after he took a bullet through his chest. Both his left and right lungs collapsed. His pulmonary artery was permanently damaged as the bullet pierced through one of his lungs and out his back.

With one squeeze of a trigger, Keller's biggest challenge was no longer competing to be starting quarterback. His fight was using every ounce of his strength to live.

"It was a nightmare"

What started as a simple party with friends in Deerfield Village Apartments quickly turned when a fight broke out. Two people, who were in Mount Pleasant to enjoy the bar scene, crashed the party and were ultimately kicked out.

One grabbed a gun and shot at both Keller and 23-year-old Tyler Bunting, wounding Bunting and leaving Keller on the ground.

Keller was rushed to a Mount Pleasant hospital to be stabilized and later air lifted to Hurley Trauma Center in Flint, the only level 1 trauma center that serves mid-Michigan, northern Michigan and the Thumb.

"I just remember I was in the hospital and I didn't know why I was there," Keller said.

The incident left the Mount Pleasant community, and the football team, in a state of shock.

"It shakes you when it comes to the core of people that you are so closely involved with," said head coach Jim McElwain in an April 26 press conference. "Part of being in Mount Pleasant is that kind of stuff happens elsewhere and not here."



Courtesy Photo
John Keller (center) poses with members of the Hurley Medical Center in Flint, Michigan.

Kenneth Thomas of Farmington Hills, was arrested by the Isabella County Sheriff's Office in connection with the shooting. He was arraigned on Aug. 2 and will appear before a jury in January 2022.

Keller's parents, Ray and Maria, received a phone call shortly after the shooting. What they heard was a parents worst nightmare: Their child was shot and fighting for his life. The couple dashed out the door and made the trip from Canton to Flint to be at their sons side.

"It was a nightmare," Ray said to ESPN. "The (whole) month was a nightmare."

Keller does not hold a grudge against what happened during the life-altering April evening. Instead, he attacks his situation with unwavering optimism.

"You can either let it destroy you or let it make you," Keller said.

Football has always been my go-to

Growing up in the same town as the Pro Football Hall of Fame, Keller's life has revolved around battling on the gridiron. His playing days started with flag football in second grade, idolizing the work ethic and competitive nature of NFL quarterbacks Tom Brady and Aaron Rodgers.

Keller was the starting quarterback at North Canton Hoover High School for three seasons. Eventually, his next step of playing collegiate football would become a reality. Schools such as Cincinnati, Akron, Marshall, West Virginia and other midwest colleges began to show interest.

He decided to start his collegiate career at the University of Cincinnati as a 2018 walk-on.

After a year, he left the Bearcats to transfer to Pearl River Community College in Poplarville, Mississippi – 975 miles away from his high school.

The Wildcats finished 3-6 in 2019. Through a connection with Austin Appleby, a former quarterback at North Canton Hoover who served as an offensive analyst and quality control coach for CMU's 2019 season, Keller moved more than 1,000 miles away and transferred to CMU.

His first practices in Mount Pleasant were challenging, but due to NCAA transfer regulations, Keller had to sit out the 2020 season.

"I was used to college football. It's fast paced and you're moving around a lot," Keller said. "It was nice to be with the team and everything, but I (wish I was) out there playing."

Being grateful

After spending the summer at his family home, Keller returned to Mount Pleasant for the 2021 fall semester.

He arrived back to campus in late August and began his physical therapy with CMU athletics, focusing on getting his blood flowing and regaining his strength. His rehab workouts consist of high repetition cardio workouts that help raise his heart rate in a healthy manner lasting approximately 90 minutes.

"The thing about an injury like this is that it is not an external injury like an ACL," Keller said. "It is an internal injury; letting things on the inside heal takes more time."

Not only did Keller get to start up with rehab at CMU, but he also finally got to be reunited with some of his closest friends, including Nick

Apsey, Hunter Buczkowski, Joel Wilson, Daniel Richardson and Darius Bracy.

"I have a lot of best friends," Keller said while laughing.

Being back in the football locker room with his teammates is something Keller is especially grateful for. Although he is restricted to the sidelines for the second-straight season, he still gets to be part of CMU's 2021 season, something that looked improbable in May.

Today he makes his presence felt in the quarterback room where he helps with film and writing down plays during games.

What the future holds

Keller still believes CMU is the right place for him. He is grateful for the support he has received.

"I feel like CMU is family," Keller said. "I like everyone here. Everyone's really cool and nice."

After his incident, Keller's perspective on life has changed. He does not take anything for granted. While he aims to play in 2022, Keller sees himself in either two spots: playing football or moving on to something else, such as getting involved in entrepreneurship.

He now lives by the mantra "grow seeds instead of weeds".

"A big key is to be grateful," said Keller, a psychology major. "I think gratitude is what really creates fulfillment in life. Be grateful for what you have and be thankful for the people you have."

"It's only you, and you can't live anyone else's life. Love your life."

Following former City Manager Nancy Ridley's retirement on Nov. 1, her successor Aaron Desentz has new goals for his position.

Desentz transitioned from the city manager role in Eaton Rapids to Mount Pleasant. His employment began on Oct. 18 and officially took over for Ridley on Nov. 1.

"Mount Pleasant is a city full of unique characteristics," Desentz said. "It was a career-advancing opportunity I couldn't pass up on."

Central Michigan Life spoke with Desentz on his origins in city government and goals for the future of Mount Pleasant.

How did you get involved in city government?

I originally got a four-year degree at Eastern (Michigan University) in criminology because I was 19 and thought becoming a cop would be exactly like "Miami Vice." Naturally, I graduated in 2009 in the middle of the recession when no one was hiring police officers. I was looking for a graduate program and went back to Eastern for a masters in public administration. During graduate school I interned in several places, including Washtenaw County under the county administrator and in the City of Dexter in their finance department. I also interned for the VA Ann Arbor Healthcare System in their Emergency Management Department. Throughout all these internships I discovered a passion for city government. Helping communities in need spoke to my interests and skills. Six months after graduation I got my first job as city manager with the Village of Shelby and worked there for two years. I moved on to the City of Leslie where I worked for three years until the Eaton Rapids position opened up.

What has been your greatest achievement in your time as a city manager of Eaton Rapids?

Nothing has been as eye-opening as the Eaton Rapids Riverwalk Project. Our downtown is an island flanked on both sides by the Grand River. A riverwalk system was developed several years ago on the west side of the island that connects the parks, kayaking center and downtown amenities. However, the east side was in disrepair. We worked to fix the pedestrian bridge and sea walls on the east side, as well as replace various park equipment and introduce the riverwalk.

It was a huge \$3 million project that was two decades in the making. Complications with funding prioritization almost led to us losing a \$3 million public infrastructure grant from the Michigan Economic Development Corporation's (MEDC) Community Block Grant Program. We already had \$100,000 in the project and I didn't want it to all go to waste. We got in contact with dozens of representatives, senators, city managers and higher-ups at MEDC to fight for the grant. Despite many obstacles, our grant was honored and we got to finish the project after an 18-month-long process. The riverwalk opened on Oct. 6.

Why did you decide to transition from Eaton Rapids to Mount Pleasant?

Eaton Rapids was a significant jump-up in size compared to the previous communities I'd managed. I've been with

Q&A



Aaron Desentz

Following the retirement of Nancy Ridley, the new city manager makes the transition from Eaton Rapids to Mount Pleasant. He upgrades from a city that has a 5,200 person population to one with 26,000 people, a public state university and a tribal community.

Leona Falconer ■ Staff Reporter

Eaton Rapids for nearly four years and I had a great time working with the staff, council and community, but Mount Pleasant was an opportunity I couldn't ignore. It has a lot of unique opportunities: a much larger population, a D1 university and tribal-government relations. Eaton Rapids is around 5,200 people whereas Mount Pleasant is 26,000. From a job prospects perspective it's a step up for me and an increase in responsibility.

How will your prior experience support you as Mount Pleasant's new city manager?

I'm new to a city as big as Mount Pleasant, but the basis of a city manager position is universal no matter what size a city is. The scope changes but the structure is the same. Many of the duties I had in Eaton Rapids are reflected here in Mount Pleasant. For example, the Mission Street Redevelopment is similar to a highway redevelopment we worked on in downtown Eaton Rapids, focusing on central boulevards, trees, increasing pedestrian traffic and sidewalks.

A brand new aspect here is the university, but I've had lots of experience with the University of Michigan when I worked in Ann Arbor. I also have experience dealing with new issues and immediate crises. When I first joined Eaton Rapids in 2018 there was serious flooding in the downtown to be dealt with. Again in 2018, a local magnesium-parts manufacturing plant had an explosion at their factory. That company is the biggest employer in town and also the biggest utility payer, creating a major economic problem to solve. The business they do for Eaton Rapids is close to \$5.5 million per year. And of course when COVID-19 started we had to adapt like everyone else. It was important to balance what's best for the organization while also keeping the public safe and healthy.

What are your core beliefs as a city manager?

I'm a person who is very much attuned to finances. Money really dictates the difference that city government can have on the community. Strategy of where the city is going and the long term goals we want to achieve is also vital. Organization is important in how we're structured and how we interact with each other to accomplish our goals. I think if you're successful in these three key areas it's a recipe for a good city manager. I try to do the most good for the most people. Treating everyone with respect and open communication is the key to success.

What are your goals as Mount Pleasant's city manager?

Goal number one is to meet and get to know everybody. I need to learn about the different personalities here and see how everyone functions together. In the beginning of this role I just want to be a listening tool and absorb as much wisdom as I can. I want to get my footing until I officially identify the changes or improvements I'd like to see in the community. Nancy's already started getting me caught up on the master plan and important information to know. I'm excited to get started and join the community.

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Not Forgotten: CMU effort re

By Michael Livingston
Editor-In-Chief

On Friday, Nov. 5, American and Michigan flags were lowered to half-staff across the state.

The sunken flag symbolizes the short but impactful life of John Shelemba, born and raised in Hamtramck. It also represents years of work to bring him home from a forgotten war.

“On behalf of the entire state of

Michigan, I thank Army Pfc. John Shelemba for his service and sacrifice to our nation,” said Gov. Gretchen Whitmer. “We are grateful to finally have him home. My thoughts are with his loved ones as he is laid to rest.”

Those efforts eventually gained support at Central Michigan University.

For the last two years, Philosophy Professor Hope Elizabeth May and Trenton junior Michael Buzzy have brought Prisoner of War/Missing in Action activism to campus with a weekly podcast, “Virtues of Peace,” educational events and an annual day of recognition.

It was May, Buzzy and other collaborators who sent a letter to Whitmer’s office in September requesting that the flags be lowered.

Years of work will finally pay off Thursday but to fully appreciate the undertaking, you need to understand the Hamtramck boy’s story from the beginning.

Who was John Shelemba?

Sometime in 1948, a blue-eyed, 130-pound boy named John Shelemba enlisted in the U.S. Army.

He was the son of an Austrian immigrant who had moved to Michigan after World War I. The 17-year-old was eager to serve.

His life and military career were cut short by the Korean War.

Shelemba served in Company: L, 3rd Battalion, 34th Infantry Regiment. He went missing in action on July 20, 1950, during his unit’s defense of Taejon, South Korea.

A story published in the Aug. 25, 1950 edition of the *Detroit Free Press* would be the last anyone would hear of him – including his family.

One of Shelemba’s last living relatives is his half-niece Michelle Vance. Today, she thinks about the 60+ Veterans’ Days she and her family could have remembered him.

“There was no talk in our family at all about John,” Vance said. “I think what had happened is they were just so grief-stricken; nobody ever even talked about what happened.”

Following the signing of the Korean Armistice Agreement on July 27, 1953, the American Graves Registration Services was tasked with recovering the remains of American casual-

ties lost in South Korean battlefields.

Shelemba’s remains were recovered, but without dog tags his skeleton provided little help in identification.

For more than 50 years his bones laid nameless at the National Memorial Cemetery of the Pacific, also known as the “Punchbowl Cemetery” in Honolulu, Hawaii.

Instead of a name, the remains had numbers: “Unknown X-251 (from Taejon).”

In October 2018, Shelemba’s bones were some of the first to be exhumed as part of the Defense POW/MIA Accounting Agency’s (DPAA) Korean War identification program. For the next several months, the remains were under the care of forensic anthropologist Jennie Jin.

It took about a year of lab analysis for Jin to answer three important questions: Who was Unknown X-251? Where did he come from? Who is left to remember him?

“We had to do a lot of historical research to see if that was the case, to see who this could be?” Jin said in “Virtues of Peace” on Nov. 19, 2020.

On Sept. 12, 2019 Jin and her team found their answers.

They used dental, anthropological and radiograph analysis to identify Shelemba’s remains. In the end, Jin said an irregularity in the clavicle bone was the last piece of evidence they needed to give Shelemba his identity back.

Getting the call

When Michelle Vance was contacted by the DPAA about her missing uncle, she thought it was a scam.

She listened to the message left on



her cell phone from a woman claiming to be from the U.S. army. Vance was intrigued, though, by how much information the woman had about her family.

“I told my husband that this woman knew way too much. He says, ‘just forget about it.’” Vance said. “Well, I’ve been married 42 years, I don’t always listen to my husband.”

She called back. She was able to help the DPAA verify Shelemba’s lineage.

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was a lesson in empathy, Vance said.

“I have a son. Thank goodness there’s no draft right now. My thoughts were if anything were to happen to him, I’d want somebody to do the right thing,” Vance said. “It’s not about closure for me, it’s about doing right by (John).”

Shelemba’s name is recorded on the Courts of the Missing at the Punchbowl Cemetery, along with the others who were missing from the Korean War.

Receiving recognition

For Buzzy and May, giving Shelemba his identity back was only part of the goal.

May is a tenured professor that engages in public-facing scholarship focusing on the peace through law movement. Buzzy is an honors student majoring in political science and philosophy. Together the duo works to create POW/MIA educational materials for the CMU community.

It was at their request that CMU began celebrating POW/MIA recognition day in September 2020. The event featured a ceremonial raising of the black and white flag.

After hearing about Shelemba’s reidentification from a 2019 news article, Buzzy and May decided to localize the universal issue.

They invited Vance and Jin to talk about Shelemba’s story on their podcast, “Virtues of Peace” which is all documented on May’s website.

“It’s stories like Shelemba that I’ve found immense meaning in,” Buzzy said. “These stories have helped me battle my own adversities in life.”

There are plenty of stories to choose from. According to the DPAA website, nearly 8,000 Korean War

service members are still unaccounted for.

The state recognized two in August by lowering flags. Their names were Sgt. Jessie D. Hill and Cpl. Dale W. Wright. Both were Korean War veterans like Shelemba. Buzzy and May wondered why he had not received the same honor.

“(Lowering the flags) sends a strong message to POW/MIA family members of all wars; be it WWII, Korean, the Cold War or Vietnam,” said Marty Eddy, lead coordinator for the League of POW/MIA families in Michigan. “It says that the state of Michigan recognizes the sacrifice and pays tribute and honor to the service member.”

Buzzy and May made it their mission to give Shelemba the same tribute.

Buzzy wrote a six-paragraph letter to Whitmer’s office earlier this semester. Writing the letter was easy – getting it through the state capitol bureaucracy was not.

“We sent the letter through every channel we possibly could hoping something would get through,”

Buzzy said.

After getting signatures from CMU President Bob Davies and Director of CMU’s Veterans’ Resource Center Duane Klienhardt, the letter made its way through the Governor’s portal, the office of Rep. Abraham Aiyash and the hands of lobbyist groups.

Near the end of October, May finally got the answer she and Buzzy had been waiting for.

The flags were lowered in Shelemba’s name the day after his public funeral which is at noon on Thursday, Nov. 4 at the Great Lakes National Cemetery in Holly.

He was laid to rest with full military honors.

The effort was about putting policy into practice, May said, about using individual stories to examine a widespread issue and addressing the United States’ most overlooked war.

“I call it leveraging history,” May said. “You find a moment, or a symbol, that many different stories can coalesce into one thing.”

The DPAA is the only government agency tasked with finding and identifying missing soldiers from past

conflicts dating back to World War II.

According to their data, there are about 80,000 U.S. service members from past conflicts who remain unidentified.

For Pfc. John Shelemba, his journey is now at an end and he can rest in peace.

“Grandpa, Uncle Johnny is finally coming home,” Vance wrote on Facebook after receiving the call from the DPAA. “I have goosebumps. I am eternally grateful to the Department of Defense and the Army who never gave up in their search.”

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Fall 2021 enrollment numbers released

By Tess Ware
Associate Editor

On Tuesday, President Bob Davies sent an email to the campus community releasing the enrollment information for fall 2021.

Not included in the email was the total number of students enrolled for the fall semester.

Central Michigan Life reached out to University Communications multiple times throughout the semester for the Fall 2021 enrollment numbers and was told the numbers were not ready to be released. CM Life reached out again on Tuesday after Davies' email was sent out and received the numbers the same day.

According to this year's statistics, there are 11,441 undergraduate and 3,980 graduate students enrolled at CMU. Executive Director of Communi-

cations Heather Smith said this is not the final number as enrollment may change throughout the semester.

In Fall 2012 there were 27,100 undergraduate and graduate students enrolled at CMU, a difference of 11,679 compared to the current enrollment.

The number of students living on campus has also declined. Currently, there are 3,666 students living in residence halls compared to 4,012 in fall 2020 when classes were online.

The numbers provided by Davies in the email were:

- 729 new transfer students
- 16% increase in the number of international students
- 87% of the 2,200 new freshmen goal was reached
- A "roughly" 2% increase in Global Campus enrollment
- 28% decrease in face-to-face classes

Davies cited competition and COVID-19 as reasons for the recent decline in enrollment. CMU has seen a trend of declining enrollment over the past 10 years.

"This is an extremely competitive market," Davies said in the email. "And it will become more so as new organizations, such as Google, enter the field. Over the past decade, we have lost market share in Michigan to these competitors, and as a result we have seen our enrollments decline."

Other Michigan universities released their Fall 2021 enrollment numbers in the first few weeks of the semester.

The University of Michigan and Michigan State University released their enrollment reports in Mid October.

In his email, Davies outlined the steps CMU is taking to make the university more attractive to prospective

State universities announce enrollment

Michigan universities released enrollment numbers at the start of the fall 2021 semester. CMU officials said the numbers will not be "official" until January 2022.

UNIVERSITY	DATE	NUMBER
M-Tech	Sept. 2	22,406
Ferris State	Sept. 2	7,388
GVSU	Sept. 13	6,977
WMU	Sept. 13	15,309
Wayne State	Sept. 16	12,900
U-M Dearborn	Sept. 22	6,255
Oakland	Oct. 18	7,388
U-M	Oct. 21	32,282
MSU	Oct. 21	38,574
CMU	Nov. 2	11,441
SVSU	Nov. 5	7,388
EMU	Numbers unavailable	
Northern	Numbers unavailable	

Source: University websites

students. These initiatives include:

- A new cmich.edu will be launched

in December that is more user-friendly than the current version.

- The December 2020 launch of CMU's new brand "We Do."
- Increasing outreach to other areas of the midwest and Michigan and reaching out to younger groups like high school freshmen.
- Investing in diversity, equity and inclusion initiatives.

Expanding online and flexible learning opportunities for non-traditional students like working adults. In response to Davies' email, Faculty Association President Amanda Garrison said 'We Do' is not increasing enrollment.

"We don't wallow in 'We Do.' That's not energetic. You don't want to create something that's easy to forget, or that people are confused by or that people can easily make fun of," she said.

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CMU graduate, Navy commander Walker accepts Black Engineer of the Year award

By Zipporah Abarca
Staff Reporter

Central Michigan University graduate and Navy Commander, Desmond Walker, was selected for the "Career Achievement in Government Award" during the 2022 Black Engineer of the Year Award STEM conference.

According to a press release from the Navy Office of Community Outreach, the Black Engineer of the Year Awards is a worldwide event that recognizes and celebrates the hard-work and success of those that haven't received recognition for their outstanding achievements, specifically those in STEM.

The overall goal of this conference is not only to celebrate and recognize these students, but to also assist in building connections with STEM

professionals and educators for the future, the release said.

Walker joined the Navy in 1996 after graduating from high school.

Walker decided that after a few years of service he would pursue higher education. In 2005, Walker earned his Bachelors of Science in electronics technology from Norfolk State University and afterwards transferred to Old Dominion University to receive his Master of Engineering Management in 2012. To further his education even more, Walker earned his Master of Business Administration from Central Michigan University in 2020.

Walker is in the prospective commanding officers training pipeline for Surface Warfare Officers. Next, he will serve as the executive officer of USS Bainbridge.

"The best part of this opportunity



Courtesy photo
Desmond Walker graduated from CMU in 2020 with a master's degree in business administration.

is that I will get to work with some of the finest Americans that made military service their career of choice," Walker said. "Under the leadership

of the current commanding officer, I look forward to embracing their vision toward effectively and efficiently executing the ship's mission at home and abroad."

Being part of the Navy has served as a gateway of opportunities for Walker and has strengthened him further through vigorous training and endless responsibilities.

"I have had a great career while maintaining a loving and supportive family dynamic," Walker said. "After 24 years of marriage, through the highs and the lows, we have faced every challenge together and I'm grateful. Being selected for command was another proud moment. When I enlisted, I planned to serve on one ship and learn a trade. Now, I'm on the cusp of commanding my own ship."

Walker said that after gaining more

experience in the Navy and having guidance from mentors to assist him on his journey, he wants to be able to help people achieve the goals they set for themselves. He said that people should never stray away from their dreams in order to achieve what others think they should have. This will be detrimental to one's own well-being and happiness.

"At this point in my career, serving in the Navy means I have the opportunity to be an example of leadership for the officers and sailors that are coming up the ranks behind me," Walker said. "I did not see a lot of Black officers when I was enlisted, but I believed it was possible. Now, as a senior officer, I'm in a position to help anyone, regardless of their demographic, become the best version of themselves as part of the world's greatest Navy."

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Sexism remains a prevalent issue in collegiate athletics

Women in sports have always fought an uphill battle. When sexism comes from the very organizations that control the sports themselves, it only proves how much work we have left to do before women are fully accepted and welcomed in sports.

Undoubtedly, Central Michigan University's female athletes are still greatly impacted by gender stereotypes. We must be very conscientious about how they behave and dress in the public eye.

I am going on my fifth year of playing volleyball for CMU, and the aggravation I get from the subtle sexism has been prevalent each year.

Something subtle that caught my eye while being an athlete here is the lack of media coverage women in athletics get.

In 2019, our team was on a 17-2 start to their season and a 12-game win streak, which was tied for the highest win streak in program history.

On the day of volleyball's 13th win streak game, every student at CMU received an email from the university to attend the CMU football game. There was not one mention of the home volleyball game that evening.

Female athletes have to constantly promote



Grace Butler
—
Staff Reporter

their games themselves. It's hard to build a fan base around your sport if no one even knows when your sport is playing and/or winning due to lack of promotion.

The primary source of collegiate sports is football, and this causes the majority of resources to go to that team. This means that women's sports in particular are the last ones to receive these resources. This makes workouts, along with other activities, a bigger challenge than it needs to be.

For example, if women's volleyball is in the Indoor Athletics Facility during their designated workout time, you'd think they would get full reign of the facility, right? Not quite.

During 2021 Summer workouts, we were kicked out of the turf bay during our designated workout time because football was in there, too.

We weren't even in the same area as football; our team was off to the side doing med ball throws onto a wall.

Not only did we get relocated, but our team also heard the football coaches say that volleyball needs to get out of the turf bay because the football players are getting "distracted."

However, there have been multiple occasions where the volleyball team has been at workouts and running sprints and football players have walked through our sprinting lines, even brushing up against us.

If anyone from a women's team ever even came close to messing up a line of sprints in football, they'd get into trouble.

Another rule that women here must follow is the "no jewelry" policy. During practice and games, my team is not allowed to wear any kind of jewelry, a rule established by the NCAA.

This sounds like a small rule, but wearing a chain/necklace or any of that sort actually raises an athlete's confidence and comfort levels. Take a look at almost every football and baseball player during their games, and almost all of them wear a chain.

If Olympic volleyball players, the highest level of volleyball you could possibly play, are allowed to wear jewelry, why aren't Division I players? Volleyball is not a contact sport.

It seems as though no matter how many times female athletes are vocal about the sexism experienced, nothing is ever done and it is looked at as a low priority in athletics. It has gotten to the point where informing the ones in charge seems pointless, and that we are left to deal with it in silence.

Being a female athlete is frustrating when women's sports at CMU are not supported as much and treated as equally as men's sports due to this lack of knowledge.

The misconception that men's practices, workouts and games are harder and are looked at with a higher priority than women's is insulting. What's worse is women work just as hard and produce good – if not better – results, but still receive less recognition.

Women are still being treated differently in comparison to men in the collegiate world. Those in charge of the Athletic Boards of schools and the head of the NCAA have to start making a difference sooner rather than later.

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CHIPPEWAS LEAVE BRONCOS BATTERED, BRUISED

Central Michigan clashed with arch-rival Western Michigan for the 73rd time on Wednesday, Nov. 3. After trailing 14-0 early in the second quarter, CMU junior wide receiver Kalil Pimpleton scored three touchdowns in the final 5:03 of the first half to give CMU a 21-14 lead entering halftime. The Chippewas never trailed again, sending the Waldo Stadium crowd for the exits with seven minutes left in the fourth quarter. The Chippewas conquered the Broncos 42-30 and brought the Victory Cannon trophy back to Mount Pleasant for the first time since 2017.



Photos by Mitch Vosburg | Sports Editor

Muskegon junior wide receiver Kalil Pimpleton runs back a punt for a touchdown against Western Michigan on Wednesday, Nov. 3 at Waldo Stadium.



Battle Creek native Dillon Rose celebrates a Western Michigan penalty on Wednesday, Nov. 3 at Waldo Stadium.



Petoskey sophomore tight end Joel Wilson (left) and Detroit redshirt freshman running back Lew Nichols III celebrate a Central Michigan touchdown against Western Michigan on Wednesday, Nov. 3 at Waldo Stadium.

A decline in trust and enrollment

University's release of Fall 2021 enrollment update casts doubt, suspicion on transparency

Dear Michigan Public Universities, Here's how you shouldn't release your fall enrollment numbers.

Halfway through the fall semester, send a lengthy email to the campus community. Stress that higher education is an extremely competitive market. Lead with an examination of declining high school populations and the impact of COVID-19 on education. Also, throw in a discussion about the sheer number of options students have for post-secondary education to justify your declining enrollment.

Include the number of new transfer students. Share the percentage increase in international student enrollment. Explain how you just barely missed your freshman recruitment goal.

Definitely don't include the actual enrollment number for the fall semester.

Make sure parents and prospective students know nothing about the state of the university they are potentially interested in attending.

After all, an accurate accounting of our enrollment could affect enrollment.

From, a concerned student newspaper.

The university needs to do better. Much better.

People whose livelihoods depend on a healthy CMU – faculty, staff, local business owners – deserve the truth about CMU's declining enrollment.

Central Michigan Life reached out to University Communications multiple times throughout the semester for the Fall 2021 enrollment numbers. We were told the numbers were not ready to be released.

We finally got our numbers. We received them the same day that President Bob Davies' 2,400-word email was sent out to the

EDITORIAL

campus community.

After requesting the actual enrollment numbers in a follow-up email to University Communications, according to this year's statistics, there are 11,441 undergraduate and 3,980 graduate students enrolled at CMU. Our residence hall population is about 3,600.

That's about 11,000 fewer students here today than attended CMU in 2012. It's about 1,700 fewer students at CMU than just last year.

It's true that undergraduate enrollment is declining nationwide. The COVID-19 pandemic undoubtedly still has a lingering impact.

Every institution will have bad news to deliver at some point.

One way to make that situation worse is to partner bad news with suspicion or distrust.

What message does it send to prospective students and their parents when they can't get a straight answer on how many people go to school here? Neglecting to include the total enrollment figure in the initial email doesn't inspire trust or faith in this administration.

It makes it appear like we have something to hide. It casts doubt over everything the university says moving forward.

We all knew it was coming. So why did it take so long for our fall enrollment total to be publicly announced?

Other institutions, such as Western Michigan University, Grand Valley State University and Ferris State released Fall 2021 enrollment numbers in the first few weeks of the semester.

While there's no law demanding we release our numbers before a certain date, why do we let our peer institu-

tions show us up when it comes to transparency and efficiency?

University Communications explained the decision to delay sharing enrollment information was made by the board of trustees in 2017. The board believed releasing the fall enrollment number in January provided a more accurate number. Indeed, some students do enroll in eight-week classes halfway through the fall semester.

How many students? Since 2018, it's less than 200 students per year added to the "final" count - a statistically insignificant number considering the drastic decline year by year.

Davies at least pushed the university to release enrollment information for fall during the fall semester. That makes the Nov. 2 "enrollment update" even more disappointing. Why bother sharing enrollment data if you still withhold the number that matters the most?

Enrollment decline is a universal problem for U.S. public universities - and CMU has lost at least 1,000 students a year for the last six years. It's time they own up to it.

One good thing Davies did share in his email was outlining the "Aggressive steps CMU is taking" in order to try to attract students to the university.

Good luck with that.

If this administration can't be transparent about our enrollment problem with its students, alumni, employees and community supporters, why should we believe you have viable solutions?

Here's one way CMU can do better:

Within the first six weeks of each semester, provide the public an accurate look at enrollment. If you need to adjust that number at the end of the semester for accuracy, nobody would begrudge that.

Just tell us the truth. That's what a good university does.

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Central Michigan Life's editorial and business offices are located at 436 Moore Hall, Central Michigan University, Mount Pleasant, MI 48859, telephone (989) 774-3493 or 774-LIFE.

LIFE IN BRIEF

B2 Outlet Store to open new location in Mount Pleasant on Nov. 18

By **Brendan Wiesner**
Staff Reporter

Michigan-based outlet store B2 will open its new location in Mount Pleasant.

B2 Outlet Stores sell a wide variety of clothing, shoes and other accessories available at other retail stores.

On Nov. 18, B2 will open its new location at 1412 S. Mission Street, next to Menna's Joint. Halloween City and MC Sports have previously occupied the space.

Marketing Associate Erik Durham said by filling the store with overstock items from other retail stores B2 can sell the same products at a cheaper price.

"When you come to B2 your dollar can be stretched a long ways," Durham said. "It's quite a treasure hunt experience of a store. Every week it's going to be a little different. Our brand is constantly growing and expanding."

The Mount Pleasant storefront will be B2's 24th location opened since its founding in 2014 under the store's original name Benefit Twice Outlet Stores. Benefit Twice is a reference to the store's main goal of benefiting the communities it's based in with charity and support.

"We heard that Mount Pleasant is a community (with) a lot of nonprofits and a lot of people that care about giving back; we live and breathe a mantra of giving back," Durham said. "Since we've opened in 2014 we've been able to give back \$1 million to local and global causes in the communities we are a part of."

In addition to the storefront locations, B2 also sells limited supplies online and ships them directly to customers.

More information on the store or on how to get involved in its charitable projects can be found on the company website.



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