

# UM Student Curator Troy Nash ends term with a mission

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NEWS EDITOR

Sitting among the University of Missouri (UM) Board of Curators is a lone student voice. For the past two years Troy Nash has been the voice for the 50,000 students of the UM system.

At the beginning of 1998, Nash will hand that torch off to a UM-St. Louis student who will be chosen as the next Student Curator. During his time in office, he has built up the reputation of that post to one of a respected student leader.

"This position doesn't come with instructions," Nash explained. "Traditionally, it has been a non-voting seat on the board, rotating between campuses every two years. Nothing more than ceremonial."

"Let's look what I've done," Nash invited, "there's been no tuition increase above the Higher Education Price Index. I was involved with that Kiesler [the former Chancellor of UM-Columbia] thing. I've had an opportunity to travel the state. What I've done is a break from the past. I was invited behind closed doors. They [the board] asked me to vote on Pacheco [President of the UM System]."

Having graduated this spring from the School of Law hasn't stopped Nash from doing his most important work—recruiting for UMKC.

"I have the largest number of family members at UMKC," Nash laughed. His love for UMKC is palpable and infectious. "This university has given me so much. My brother, sister, wife, and best friends are here."

"I have a passion for [UMKC] and I don't hide it. Because I know

where I come from. I grew up and spent most of my young adult life on public assistance. East of Troost, I lived in every project—from Holy Temple to Friendship Village—single parent mother doing the best she could under the circumstances. I respect that. We didn't leave my mother out either, she got her GED at 55. I mean, this is a family affair."

"When I returned from the service I looked at the state of my family and said something needs to be done. I walked down into the basement where my old room was and cleaned up the mess...there were boxes everywhere. I served for four years, left with a girlfriend and came back with a wife. I said to myself 'what am I gonna do with my family?' They are all good people, all hard working, doing the best that they could under the circumstances. I had to do something. I made a conscious effort to invest in my family, very self-centered in that regard at first, saying, 'I wanted to build my family to be so successful. I didn't know I could do that sort of thing and people would listen.'"

"You have to lead by example. I'm a firm believer in that. And you will have your fair share of critics. See, when you make the decision to do something with your life, all hell will break loose. It's a fact of life that not everyone is going to like you. But, once you get comfortable with who you are, you can get past that because you know the work you are doing is worthwhile."

"I used my position to make a difference," Nash said. "Every issue that has ever been brought to me I have raised to the Board."

Nash turned his passion for people, UMKC, and politics into a career. Right now he serves as

special assistant to Mayor Emmanuel Cleaver while pursuing his doctorate at St. Louis University.

"I think my legacy is that I brought respectability back to the position," Nash said. "a sense of maturity and commitment."

After Jan. 1, he plans to wage a war on ignorance. "I want to get young people involved." To rouse them from what he calls an "unconscious consciousness...they are unable to make the mental leap from where they are to where they could be."

"My ultimate thing is this: where you start in life has nothing at all to do with where you end up."\*



PHOTO COURTESY OF UMKC WEB SITE.

**Student Board Rep out:** Troy Nash finishes his term as Student Curator Jan. 1, 1998. He leaves behind a legacy of respectability and sense of commitment.

## Changing of the guard

For the past two years Troy Nash has been the voice for 50,000 students in the UM system. Find out more about Nash, who leaves office January 1.

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