ANYONE WHO HAS FOLLOWED THE PROGRESS and accomplishments of the College of Human Environmental Sciences at the University of Missouri already knows the many contributions to improving the human condition that we've made and are still making. In this issue of Vanguard, we document another round of notable ways our students, alumni, and faculty members are changing the world to improve lives each and every day. “Making a difference” has become our mantra – evidenced in the stories you are about to read in this issue. In brief, our world is a better place because of this college.

In August, 2014, I informed our HES faculty, staff and students of my intention to retire effective August 31, 2015. So, this is my final column in Vanguard. Over the past 14 years, it’s been my incredible personal and professional pleasure to serve as dean of the College of Human Environmental Sciences at MU. The advances that this organization has achieved have made this a remarkable journey for me – the fond memories of which will be with me for the rest of my life. I’ve been blessed with a team of faculty, fellow administrators, and staff members who, as partners during my tenure, have made it possible for me to look back upon and think, “Wow! We really DID that!” In short, I never did anything myself. WE did everything!

We’ve seen significant enrollment growth at both the undergraduate and graduate levels because of the relevance and academic rigor of our programs. We’ve seen a dramatic increase in endowment funds because of our dedicated advancement staff, loyal supporters and donors who believe in our mission and our work. We’ve helped launch the now nationally renowned Thompson Center for Autism and Neurodevelopmental Disorders through the partnership we established with the Schools of Health Professions and Medicine, along with Bill and Nancy Thompson. We’ve witnessed the complete renovation of Gwynn Hall, with state-of-the-art classrooms and research laboratories, thanks to the successful collaboration of our college and university leadership. We’ve undergone research initiatives and obtained important federal grants with a strong faculty and a research office that supports them.

These are but a few of the outcomes that WE achieved together. I am eternally grateful to all who banded together, shoulder-to-shoulder, and moved the legs of progress forward. This is most certainly a different—and in many ways a more challenging and dangerous world—than existed in July 2001, when I arrived in Columbia to assume the dean position. A mere three months later, on September 11, 2001, world events marked a new era in history. To witness the many ways that our HES faculty, students, and alumni embraced these challenges has inspired me personally, expanding my own thinking about what people can do to improve human existence. I am a better person for it, and in my heart of hearts I hope that this college and university are better places today because of the College of Human Environmental Sciences and the work that we have done here.

I bid a fond farewell to all of you who have stuck with me, and us, over these past years. Our alumni, donors and friends of the college mean so much to us, and we appreciate you more than words can express. I wish all of you the best, and know that if my successor has the support and inspiration you’ve provided me, this wonderful college will achieve even greater heights.
Dean Jorgensen Retires...
Thank you for a wonderful 14 years!

Dean Jorgensen with Dean Emerita Bea Smith and alumnae Ashlen Snellen and her parents.

Dean Jorgensen addresses a group of alumni, faculty, staff and friends at an HES Week Awards Reception.

Dean Jorgensen having fun with Ruth Tofle and Jana Hawley at the 2014 Dogs with the Dean event.

Dean Jorgensen grills up hot dogs with Chris Hardin at the annual Dogs with the Dean event.

Dean Steve Jorgensen having fun with Ruth Tofle and Jana Hawley at the 2014 Dogs with the Dean event.

Dean Jorgensen enjoying the HES Homecoming Pizza Party with his three sons and alumna Tootie Burns.

The children in the Child Development Lab listen intently as Dean Jorgensen reads to them during the Month of the Young Child.