Speaker 1: The Missouri State Journal, a weekly program keeping you in touch with Missouri state university.

Nicki Donnelson: Part of getting ready for college is imagining yourself there, but some students don't have a clear idea of what that looks like. Maybe it's because he would be a first generation college student. Maybe his school district doesn't have the resources for the fields he dreams of. Maybe he believes he has to know his major before he ever steps a foot on campus. I'm Nicki Donnelson. Today on The Missouri State Journal I have Dr. Shawn Wahl. He is the Dean of the College of Arts and Letters in Missouri State University. He's here to share with us about pre-college experiences and how they make an impact on students' lives.

Dr. Shawn Wahl : The pre-college experiences are extremely important to the mission of Missouri State University because; A, we want to offer opportunities and access to students all across the state. That includes rural communities as well as urban areas to level the playing field. It gives students an opportunity if they're from a district that doesn't have the resources, whether that's related to science labs or artistic experiences and instruments, it gives them the opportunity to dream about going to college to actually perform or work with high quality equipment. I think anytime a student has the opportunity to come to a college campus to work with a faculty member who empowers them or who coaches them in a different way. I think those are the sorts of things that are really important.

Nicki Donnelson: The College of Arts and Letters is enhancing and expanding the pre-college offerings in hopes of inspiring a new generation of Bears. He gives us a taste.

Speaker 1: One of our highlight programs that has a true legacy dating back to 1996 is the Missouri Fine Arts Academy. We had a wonderful Missouri Fine Arts Academy in 2019. We're certainly going to expand that in 2020. We have a high school art day. This is a one day event each semester that's comprised of two workshops on a variety of topics. It's taught by faculty at Brick City. It facilitates 100 to 150 high school students in each session. We also are planning the Global Leadership Academy in summer 2020. This is a three week residential program for international students and so we're really excited about that opportunity. In addition, the Department of Communication is the home of the Spicer Debate Forum and so we're really proud of our Debate Bears that are coming off of a national championship and Lincoln Douglas Debate. We landed the state tournament, so we bring debate and speech students from all across the state, so we continue to host that. We also have the Missouri State Debate Institute.

Nicki Donnelson: MSU continues to expand its partnerships with local and regional school districts to offer more dual credit options, but all academic areas of coal are finding ways to engage school aged kids with their programs.

Speaker 1: The department of English and Concert with the Writing Center, we have the Children's Literature Festival of the Ozarks, which focuses on students from grades four to eight. We have the Middle School Writing Conference that focuses on grade six to eight and we also have the High School Writing Conference that focuses on grades nine to 12. We have the International Culture Fair, we have the world language showcase. It brings students from all across the region to help them transition from high school to college by bringing them to interact with language faculty and college students by studying world languages.

Nicki Donnelson: Annually, the Music Department holds the Coal Institute bands live and string fleeing. Wahl tells us more about the opportunities in the performance arts.

Speaker 1: An additional thing that we're really proud of is the Young Artists Keyboard Academy. We are now in All-Steinway School and so this gives young artists an opportunity to work with our keyboard faculty and provide access to our All-Steinway pianos, organ experiences as well as the carillon. In the Department of Theater and Dance, we have the high school workshop, that's usually in the fall semester, the Springs 450 high school students to attend workshops during the day as well as a performance in the evening. Something that we've also... Which is truly not only a community partnership but also a national partnership is any given child. This is both in the fall and Spring semester and it brings middle school students to campus where they attend workshops and also theater and dance production.

 And this particular program is affiliated with the Kennedy Center. We really believe for many of the students, it's the first time that they've; A, stepped onto a college campus. B, actually been to a live theater or arts experience and so it's really transformational. This year we also have a new dance day, the dance day is going to bring high school students to dance workshops and then we also have, it's a Summer Dance Intensive and so this is a proposal for Summer 2020 and what that does is it would allow students to take a week long and overall dance intensive experience and that would be affiliated with the Springfield Ballet. So we'll have more information about that soon.

Nicki Donnelson: For more information on any of the programs discussed today, search for it on the Missouri State Website at missouristate.edu or contact the Coal office at (417) 836-5247. I'm Nicki Donnelson for The Missouri State Journal.

Speaker 1: For more information, contact the office of University Communications at (417) 836-6397.