

Tyler McMurray

FLOWOOD, MISSISSIPPI NATIVE, TYLER MCMURRAY, strongly considered the University of Mississippi for her undergraduate studies. Her older sister Erin was at Ole Miss, and being the younger sibling, Tyler wanted to follow in her footsteps.

She had no ties to Mississippi State. Her father is from North Carolina and her mother is from Arkansas, they met at med school in Missouri and both landed jobs in Jackson before Tyler was born.

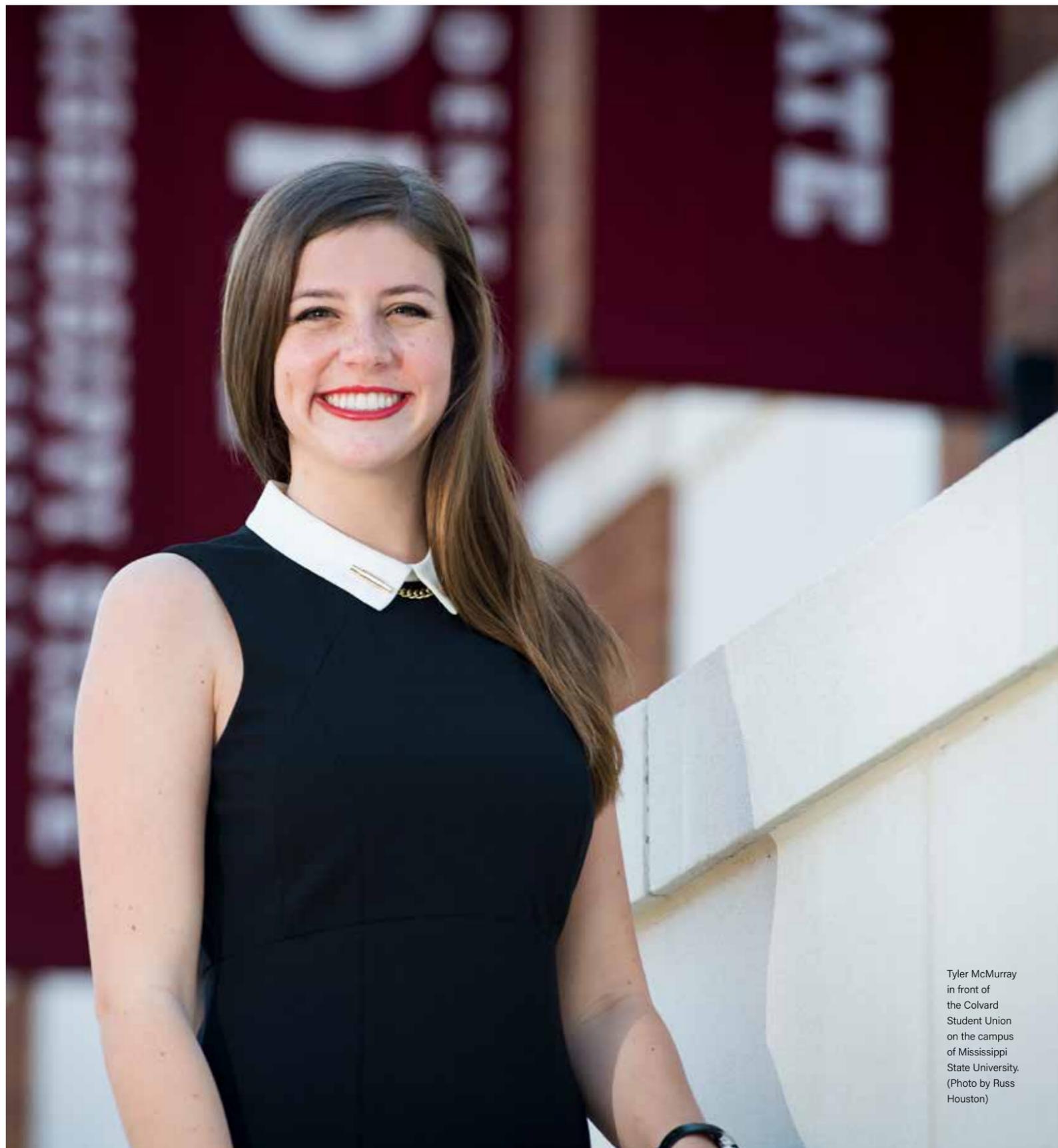
On a spring visit to Mississippi State during her senior year of high school, McMurray knew she had found her home.

“The interactions that I had with students, mostly freshmen, sealed the deal for me,” McMurray said. “They were so kind and welcoming and when I got home I told my family that I belonged at Mississippi State.”

“It also occurred to me that MSU was the best fit since I wanted to go into veterinary school,” McMurray added.

She started out in biology but quickly changed to the animal and dairy sciences major for the hands-on experience and pre-veterinary concentration.

McMurray is an active campus leader, serving in the Chi Omega sorority and as president of the MSU Student Association. She has been involved in the student governing body throughout her academic career. She has been a campus recruiter for four years, volunteering as a Roadrunner for the Office of Admissions and Scholarships. She



Tyler McMurray in front of the Colvard Student Union on the campus of Mississippi State University. (Photo by Russ Houston)

is also in Lambda Sigma honor society, and worked as an orientation leader.

A day in the life of Tyler McMurray begins early when she gets up and works out with friends at the Sanderson Center. After breakfast, it is off to class in the Wise Center, where all of her classes are held this semester. After lunch, it is meetings until 9 p.m.

As president of the MSU Student Association, McMurray has office hours so that students can come by and visit and express their concerns. While office hours are not a requirement for the Student Association, the executive board felt that it was important to make themselves available to students.

McMurray also has laboratories, part of the heavy science curriculum in the animal and dairy sciences major. She confesses that she is somewhat of an early to bed, early to rise type gal, preferring to save homework and studying for the weekend.

As MSU Student Association president, McMurray is most proud of the work by the executive board to extend the membership on the senate. While it has been talked about for many years, the Student Association, under McMurray's capable leadership, offered a seat at the table for a diverse group of students.

“The senate has always been run by students in fraternities and sororities but Mississippi State is the most diverse school in the Southeastern Conference and our senate was not representative of the unique voices across campus,” McMurray said. “We, as an executive board, worked with senators to change our constitution to create organizational seats. The organizational seats allowed students who may have been underrepresented to have a seat at the table. Those organizational seats fall into 11 different categories including cultural, political, religious, international, and recreational, among others.”

Now, anyone who is in an organization within these categories is qualified to run for a seat in the senate.

“The change gave populations on our campus a guaranteed voice in the senate,

which is supposed to be representative of our student body,” McMurray added.

She said she initially worried the measure wouldn't pass since it would take seats away from fraternities and sororities. That turned out not to be the case.

“The entire Student Association came together because they knew that this was for the betterment of the university. Passing the bill was a very cool moment,” McMurray said.

The change brought a lot more debate, however, it has made the Student Association much more productive and more inclusive, McMurray added.

McMurray plans to attend veterinary school upon graduation. She has been accepted to both Auburn University and Mississippi State. While she has always wanted to be a vet, her interest has shifted somewhat to the policy side of veterinary medicine. Trying to figure out which school will be the best fit for her projected career path has been tough. Auburn has a dual degree program with a master's in public health and a DVM, however, she is true maroon, so she has decided to pursue her vet degree at MSU.

The consummate recruiter, McMurray convinced her younger brother Nathan to attend Mississippi State, although her sister tried to persuade him to attend the University of Mississippi. McMurray quickly brought him to MSU for a campus visit and now he is a junior pursuing a chemical engineering degree at the land-grant institution.

Her favorite place on campus happens to be the same place where she first realized that Mississippi State would become her home, the Chapel of Memories.

“The Chapel of Memories was the very first place I visited on campus and the place where I fell in love with Mississippi State. That is where I had so many interactions with people, where I realized these are the people I want to be around and this is the environment in which I want to thrive,” McMurray said.

“On that first visit, all these students were gathered there playing music and hanging out and that's when I knew that Mississippi State was where I belonged.”