



**MARCH PROGRAM  
UPDATES**

**GRADUATION  
UPDATES**

**EVENT PHOTOS &  
DATES**

## MARCH PROGRAM UPDATES

*by Rachel Heinz, Director  
and Caleb Hatz, Program Coordinator*

“  
Watch your  
thoughts; they  
become words.  
Watch your  
words; they  
become actions.  
Watch your  
actions; they  
become habits.  
Watch your  
habits; they  
become character.  
Watch your  
character; it  
becomes your  
destiny.”

LAO-TZE

Welcome to the March “Bear With Us” Bear POWER Newsletter! This is a series of monthly newsletters that we will be sending to students, Ambassadors, parents, MSU faculty and staff, and community partners. The team is excited to be sharing programmatic updates with you. Thank you for your continued support to Bear POWER at Missouri State University.

**4-Year Strategic Planning:** Bear POWER staff hosted two advisory committee Zoom sessions with current Bear POWER staff, MSU faculty, Ambassadors, and students. The team worked on the development of the four year program model. The goal is for Bear POWER to move to a four year program in the Fall of 2022. Each cohort will still include 10 students but the program as a whole could serve up to 40 students total. Bear POWER staff are currently working on an update to the Comprehensive Transition Program (CTP) application which will be submitted to the U.S. Department of Education by August 2021.

**Leadership Retreat:** This past month we had our Leadership Retreat, which is our final admissions process to join a Bear POWER Cohort. During our Leadership Retreat, prospective students are able to interact with Bear POWER staff, complete various fun activities, and present their vision boards for what their best life consists of. To help them with these tasks

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# MARCH PROGRAM UPDATES (CONT.)

by Rachel Heinz, Director  
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*Photo description: Program staff smile on Zoom after the annual Leadership Retreat*

throughout the day, our prospective students are paired with a Bear POWER Ambassador. We find being paired with a Bear POWER Ambassador helps the prospective students with potential nervousness about the day. We want to specifically highlight three Ambassadors who helped this past Leadership Retreat. Megan Thornburgh, Natalie Olson, and Allison (Alli) Rudolph. Thank you all for going above and beyond to help our prospective students feel comfortable to engage with Bear POWER through this impactful day!

**Community Engagement:** Bear POWER is focusing on Community Engagement and how to use our privilege to help marginalized groups. On March 22nd, Bear POWER was lucky to go and provide assistance to Missouri State Bear Pantry. The Bear Pantry is a needs-based pantry for students where they can receive food, hygiene items, and other necessities. With the help of Bear Pantry coordinator Alex Johnson, Bear POWER was able to have a tour of their location and help with various tasks; students helped to organize food and non-food items for their community. The Bear Pantry is located in University Hall basement on Missouri State Campus. Students, faculty, and staff are able to shop at the pantry free of charge or they can go online to order their items. Thanks Bear Pantry for letting us help out! If you are interested in helping out at the Bear Pantry or providing donations, please contact Alex Johnson by email at alexjohnson@missouristate.edu or by phone at (417) 836-5774.

**Vocational Rehabilitation:** Bear POWER students started virtual intake meetings with VR staff and Bear POWER staff this month. The meetings are going well so far and students are doing a wonderful job advocating for themselves. The collaboration between Bear POWER and VR has been a great partnership that is going to be beneficial in aligning support and resources for our students. After initial in-take meetings, students will sign their applications with VR and return them. Once that is complete the job search process will officially begin. VR staff will work in collaboration with Bear POWER staff to support the students throughout this process. Students will choose a "Choice of Provider" for their services and the services will start now and continue as students start employment. Services can include: help with job search, working with job developers, finalizing a resume, going to interviews, help with the application process, and going to the job site with employees once they are hired. Services will be individualized to meet the needs of the student and can be flexed at any time depending on what the student needs.

# GRADUATION UPDATES

by Caleb Hatz, Program  
Coordinator

Bear POWER Students,  
Ambassadors, Parents, and  
Community Partners,

As we approach May, we are so excited to continue planning for and attending the graduation of our first Bear POWER Cohort! We are so proud of the amazing accomplishments that our students have done over the past five semesters.

Graduation is set for 5:00 PM on Friday, May 14th at JQH Arena. Students will be allowed up to 4 guests, but this number may increase due to different COVID restrictions.

Students, if you have not purchased your cap and gown, you can do that here. There is no set deadline to purchase, but we recommend doing it by to April 12 to allow plenty of time for shipping. You can also order online and pick it up at the Bookstore free of charge.

Bear POWER has planned many different events for students, staff, and Ambassadors the week prior to graduation. See Page 3 for more details. We will continue to update you all as we get closer to the date.

To keep up with MSU commencement, please check out their website [here](#).





# UPCOMING BEAR POWER EVENTS

**Spring Holiday - NO CLASSES**  
April 1-4, 2021

**Bear POWER Pottery Night**  
April 12, 2021  
7:00 PM to 9:00 PM  
Location TBA

**Bear POWER Relay Game Day**  
April 25, 2021  
3:00 PM to 5:00 PM  
The Quad/Hill Hall

**Bear POWER Ice Cream Night**  
May 6, 2021  
7:00 PM to 9:00 PM  
Location TBA

**Finals Week**  
May 8-13, 2021

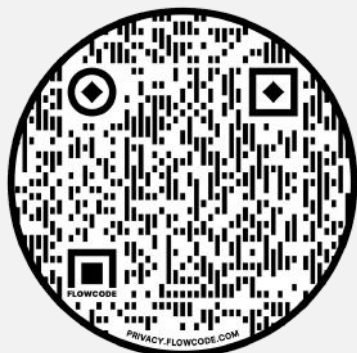
# GRADUATION EVENTS

**Bear POWER Photo Shoot**  
May 7, 2021  
2:00 PM to 4:00 PM  
Outside Hill Hall

**Bear POWER Graduation Celebration Dinner & Dance**  
May 7, 2021  
6:00 PM to 10:00 PM  
Location TBA

**Graduation**  
May 14, 2021  
5:00 PM to 7:00 PM  
JQH Arena

# DISABILITY IDENTITY WEEK EVENTS



*Photo description: Students work on guided drawings as part of an internship presentation during Internship Seminar*



*Photo description: Students volunteered at the Bear Pantry, a food pantry for students with food insecurities, as part of their Academic Support course focus on Community Engagement*



*Photo description: Director Rachel Heinz and student Thomas Cleek presented about Bear POWER to students and teachers at Republic Middle School*



*Photo description: Students and staff stand with their completed guided paintings of the desert and ocean life*