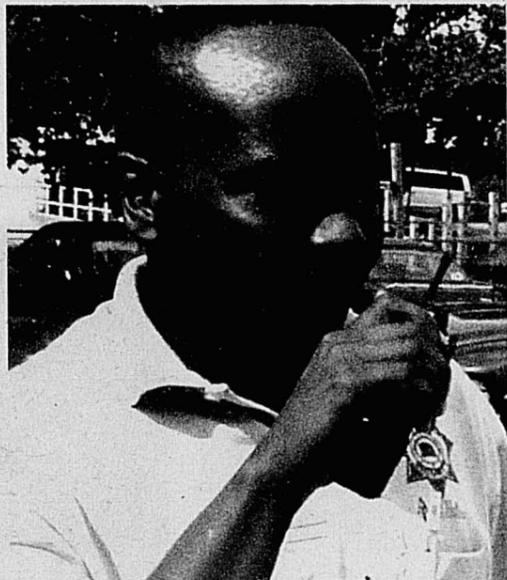


Student spotlight

Simon Muturi works hard to keep Avila safe



E. Barnes

Hilary Hetz —
Advertising Manager

Simon Muturi might be seen walking around on campus as the Avila security guard, or he may be sitting one seat over in class. By day, he keeps the campus safe, and by night, he attends classes at Avila.

Originally from Kenya, Muturi came to the United States 12 years ago. He joined the Marine Corps for four years before coming to work on campus. As a child, Muturi observed planes flying in the sky while playing with his friends. He would tell them, "one day I'll get in one of those planes and go wherever it is going." The Marines helped him accomplish that dream.

Muturi is thankful for the many opportunities living in the United States has given him. In his lifetime, he has experienced two terrorist attacks: the embassy bombings in Africa in 1998 and the attacks of Sept. 11, 2001. At the time of the embassy bombings, Muturi was still in the Marines. His native language is Swahili, so the FBI asked him to be a translator. He worked with the FBI for

three weeks after the bombings. "Experiencing both attacks, I realize what it is to be an American citizen," Muturi said. "I think it is the greatest country on earth."

Muturi came to Kansas City because of family. After earning the position of security officer, he began taking classes to continue his education.

Muturi likes Avila for many reasons.

"I love the people I work with and being able to interact with the students. I really like my job."

Muturi has always had many goals and aspirations. His major is political science, and he plans to study law after graduating from Avila.

"It has always been something I've wanted to do," Muturi said.

His plan after graduation next year is to study law, possibly at the University of Missouri-Kansas City.

"Avila is the best thing that has happened to me, and I'm excited to be here."

Avila's award-winning poet

Jamalaa' Ferrell —
Staff Writer

Instructor of English at Avila University and Kansas City native Stanley Banks is a recognized poet and winner of the 1981 Langston Hughes Prize for *On Alley Way*, his first series of poems.

Banks, raised as a poor black in Kansas City's inner city, considers his dream occupation at Avila a "fulfillment of the American potential," and a great honor "working with and instructing a diverse group of bright students."

His recently published article in the *Kansas City Star*, "Out of the Blues," remembers and gives recognition to the tragedy that struck America with grief on Sept. 11, 2001, when more than 3,000 people lost their lives due to violent acts of terrorism.

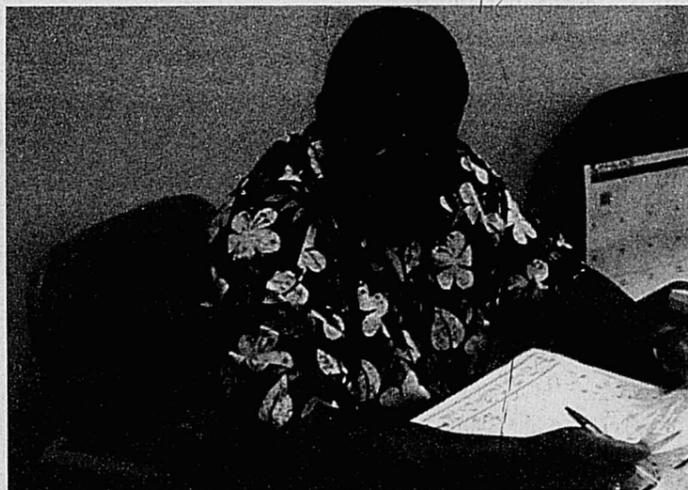
He states that the events on that

early morning forced him to "think who I am as an African-American, and citizen of the United States."

Over the years, he has had some challenging questions posed to him as a black male.

"I still believe that America is the land of big hearts and great potential," Banks said.

He was also a recipient of a 1989 National Endowment for the Arts fellowship grant for creative writing. He has been a major contributor as an example for other inner city youth destined for greatness. Banks is another one of Kansas City's voices of truth for generations to come.



Stanley Banks' article *Out of the Blues* remembers the tragedy and lives lost on Sept. 11, 2002.

E. Barnes

Prayers answered

Avila's new director of campus ministry

Betsy Rechten —
Staff Writer

He coaches his daughter's volleyball team and loves to play golf. He has worked in El Salvador to rebuild impoverished communities. He is Avila's new director of campus ministry, Dave Armstrong, and he is ready to excite the campus.

Armstrong describes himself as easy-going, easy to talk to, and open-minded. He wants people to think of him as a regular person.

"People sometimes think that since I am in ministry, I am not a real person," Armstrong said.

Armstrong is the "typical family" man and has three children, Jessie, 15, Erin, 10, and Michael, 7, and has recently bought the house that he lived in as a child.

He is happy to be at Avila, and finds it to be different from anywhere else he has worked.

"What is interesting about Avila is people are so loyal

about the university and everyone has a great attitude," Armstrong said. "Avila is very diverse and has a wonderful staff."

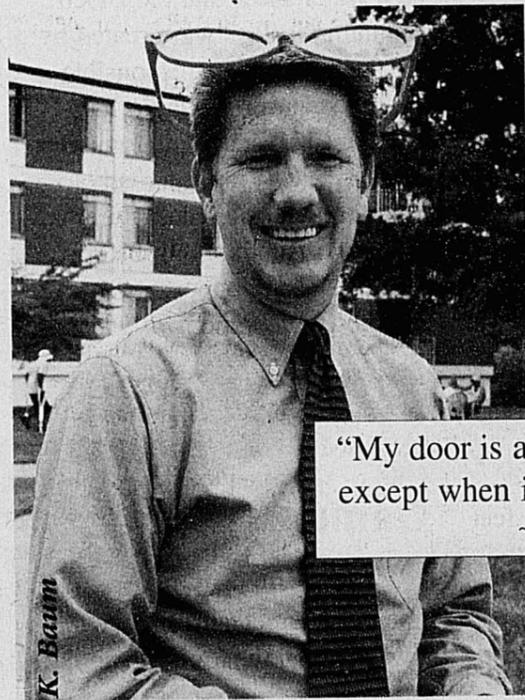
He is interested in taking a mission group to El Salvador, as he has done the last two years, and is raising money to help with a new water project.

"People have to walk over a mile to get to a well with water, and even if they get there, the water is bad. When they drink the water people get sick, and can't work and can't go to school," Armstrong said.

Junior Ingi Holland is currently involved with campus ministry and is excited to have Armstrong as part of the team.

"He has some great ideas that will hopefully get more students involved with the things that campus ministry does," Holland said.

Armstrong welcomes everyone to stop by and see him. "My door is always open except when it's closed."



"My door is always open except when it's closed."

~ Dave Armstrong

K. Baum