“An amazing story, and truly inspiring. It’s even better than you’ve heard.”

-Bill Gates
WELCOME TO MTSU!

We want to take a moment to welcome you to the Middle Tennessee State University family. Whether or not to attend college is a big decision and narrowing it down to one choice is an even tougher one. We are honored that you chose MTSU to help you reach your career and personal goals.

Our Summer Reading Program choice for 2019 is **Educated**, by Tara Westover. The author, Tara Westover was seventeen the first time she set foot in a classroom. Born to survivalists in the mountains of Idaho, she prepared for the end of the world by stockpiling home-canned peaches and sleeping with her “head-for-the-hills bag.” In the summer she stewed herbs for her mother, a midwife and healer, and in the winter she salvaged in her father’s junkyard.

Her father forbade hospitals, so Tara never saw a doctor or nurse. Gashes and concussions, even burns from explosions, were all treated at home with herbalism. The family was so isolated from mainstream society that there was no one to ensure the children received an education, and no one to intervene when Tara’s older brother became violent.

Then, lacking any formal education, Tara began to educate herself. She taught herself enough mathematics and grammar to be admitted to Brigham Young University, where she studied history, learning for the first time about important world events like the Holocaust and the civil rights movement. Her quest for knowledge transformed her, taking her over oceans and across continents, to Harvard and to Cambridge. Only then would she wonder if she’d traveled too far, if there was still a way home.

Just like the themes in the book, you too will experience moments in your college career that might be challenging, emotional and even historical. As you step on campus, you will meet new people, have new responsibilities and encounter a new way of life. You will go through a period of adjustment, having to balance your classes, studies, work time and social life. The MTSU Administrative and Faculty members are here to support you and ensure you are successful.

Thank you for choosing MTSU and we welcome you!

Sincerely,

[Signature]

Danielle Rochelle; Outreach and Support Programs Coordinator

Resources

- Phillips Bookstore (located on first floor of the Student Union Building)
  mtsu.edu/phillips
- Website for the Summer Reading Program
  mtsu.edu/summerreading
- Official Website of Author
- Website for the Publisher
  www.penguinrandomhouse.com
Tara Westover is an American author. Born in Idaho to a father opposed to public education, she never attended school. She spent her days working in her father's junkyard or stewing herbs for her mother, a self-taught herbalist and midwife. She was seventeen the first time she set foot in a classroom. After that first encounter with education, she pursued learning for a decade, graduating magna cum laude from Brigham Young University in 2008 and subsequently winning a Gates Cambridge Scholarship. She earned an MPhil from Trinity College, Cambridge in 2009, and in 2010 was a visiting fellow at Harvard University. She returned to Cambridge, where she was awarded a PhD in history in 2014.

Tara Westover is living proof that some people are flat-out, boots-always-laced-up indomitable. Her new book, Educated...is a heartbreaking, heartwarming, best-in-years memoir about striding beyond the limitations of birth and environment into a better life."

— USA TODAY

"I found her voice utterly compelling, and yet her drive and determination were equally inspiring. Hers is an extraordinary journey, told in an extraordinary way."

— NICHOLAS SPARKS, best-selling author of The Notebook and A Walk to Remember

This story, remarkable as it is, might be merely another entry in the subgenre of extreme American life, were it not for the uncommon perceptiveness of the person telling it. Westover examines her childhood with unsparing clarity, and, more startlingly, with curiosity and love, even for those who have seriously failed or wronged her. In part, this is a book about being a stranger in a strange land."

— THE NEW YORKER
OPPORTUNITIES TO VISIT WITH AUTHOR TARA WESTOVER

We are thrilled to have Tara Westover, author of *Educated*, visit the campus of Middle Tennessee State University this summer to help us welcome our new students and start off the new academic year.

**Saturday, August 24, 2019 at 5pm**

The Distinguished Lecture Committee has invited Ms. Westover to speak at MTSU’s University Convocation. It is the kick off of the new school year, and all MTSU students, parents, alumni, faculty and staff are invited to attend.

Please join us for the President’s Picnic immediately following Convocation.

SEVERAL DEPARTMENTS WILL USE *EDUCATED*

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*Information in this guide adapted from the official websites for the book: https://tarawestover.com/book/*