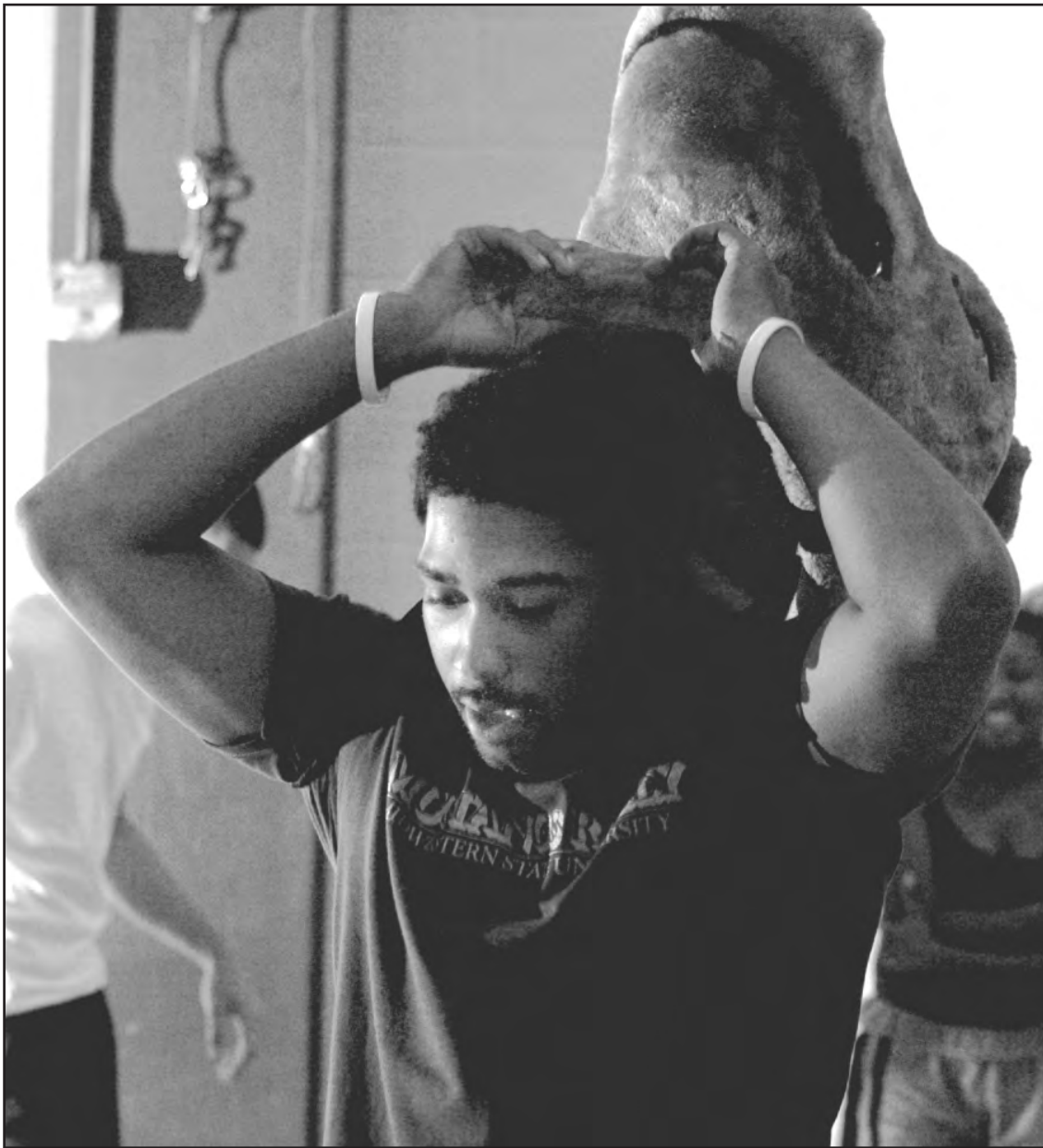


## Mascot

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ADRIAN McCANDLESS | THE WICHITAN

Eddie Douglas IV prepares for a game while putting on the new Mustangs mascot costume.

well. "I think it is a big deal to get a good name for our mascot because it is the start of something new," Amador said. "It should be something with significance like the name of a former President or important alumni." Amador suggested "Rod" for former President Louis J. Rodriguez as well as Leroy. "The only person I could think of that loves MSU with all of their heart would be Leroy, the guy that helps the football team," Amador said. "He has more spirit than half of the students that go here, and he deserves to be honored for his spirit." Amador admits there are some highs and lows when it comes to performing as the mascot. "The best part about being the mascot is making the crowd hype for the football players, and making the little kids happy," Amador said. "There is nothing better than a little kid running up to you for a big mustang hug." Amador said the worst part about being the mascot is getting into the suit right after another person, which could be one of

three other people in her case.

Marketing major Eddie Douglas IV, 22, decided to try out for the mascot on the spur of the moment.

"The only person who knew was my roommate," Douglas said. "My roommate pretty much knows everything."

Douglas makes himself known to his friends while he is in the suit.

"I have a special signal with my friends that I do," Douglas said. "It's a thrusting over the shoulder karate chop."

Although a karate chop may seem difficult to do in the costume, Douglas was prepared to make the sacrifice.

"I was excited to put it on," he said. "I was like, you know what? This is the first time I've ever done something like this, and I love doing new things so that adrenaline was already there," Douglas said.

Douglas said he did not know how to entertain a crowd while he was in the mascot suit but has watched the San Antonio Spurs coyote pump up the crowd.

"I had no clue what I was doing," Douglas said. "I saw the ears were on top and I wanted to utilize those to try and get the crowd hyped."

With Douglas' first time jitters aside, he was very pleased with the over all experience.

"All-in-all it was a good night," Douglas said. "I successfully got through it."

Since the mascot is yet to be named, Douglas offered a thoughtful suggestion of his own.

"I wouldn't mind for the new name to be Eddie, the reason why is because of that horse named Ed," Douglas said.

Douglas said he wouldn't really care what the name was as long as it wasn't corny and is excited about having a new mascot period.

"Just having him around brings out a new flavor that the school's been missing, so it's going to bring out spirit that we didn't have," Douglas said.

Being the mascot isn't just about fun and games, there are rules and regulations the mascots

must adhere to.

"Rule number one of what not to do," Douglas said, "do not take the helmet off because we don't want kids to think that the mustang ate a human alive."

Douglas jokingly said, the mascots are like the Power Rangers and their identities must remain safe.

Douglas added that he was disappointed when he found out he couldn't be a prankster while on the football field.

"We can't go punch the ref, of course that would be something I would want to do," Douglas said. "I wanted to be funny, like in baseball when the coach gets mad he starts kicking sand at the ref, well I wanted to do that when the ref made a bad call."

Douglas admits kids are sometimes the mascot's worst enemy.

"Kids want to take every part of you that they can," Douglas said. "They're going to hug your leg away from you."

With the exception of some mischievous kids, no mascot has experienced a crowd getting too rough, except one. Amador described a high school football game becoming a little too intense.

"In high school we had a big rivalry with Rider High School and my football players were getting a little too excited about the game," Amador said. "They tried to pick me up and toss me, and I thought I was going to fall."

Amador said she knew the football team was only kidding, but it still scared her a little.

"I just held my head and enjoyed the ride," Amador jokingly said.

Douglas thinks in instances where a crowd gets too rough, there should be a specific route the mascot and the escort could take to exit quickly.

"We should have a route where the person escorting us should lead us because we can't see. If they're going to run, they need to hold our hand," Douglas said. "Basically run us out of there as fast as they can," Douglas said.

Nineteen-year-old Jerrica Brown, education 4-8 major, was a mascot in middle school, high school and now she suits up as the mustang for MSU.

"I needed something else to do because I was just doing my schoolwork. It was getting boring and overwhelming," Brown said.

Brown said her middle school was unable to afford a mascot uniform so she made a new one before every game.

"I was really excited, it was kind of funny because my eagle was made out of construction pa-

per and a dance uniform, people laughed at me," Brown said. "That's when I noticed that I liked being funny."

Brown said she enjoys the spontaneous attitude the mascot brings into the mix.

"It is pretty much free style. There isn't a routine, you don't have to remember stuff," Brown said. "During tryouts we all had to make up dances, and we kept doing things over and over again and it never turned out the same."

Brown said many people are surprised when they find out she is a mascot because she is normally so serious.

"When we have practice I just let everything out," Brown said.

Brown is excited about what the new mascot will do for school spirit.

"I think it will pump people up," Brown said. "I know a lot of people say they don't like the mustang and would rather still be an Indian, but I think they are starting to get used to it."

The biggest problem that faces the mascots is the scorching heat while wearing the suit.

"The suit is made up of cotton inside some kind of insulation," Douglas said. "It's your personal sauna."

Brown, however, has yet to endure that kind of heat.

"I haven't experienced it being really hot because when we finally got to do it for the first time it was raining," Brown said. "We just had to deal with the rain so I guess we will just have to deal with the heat."

Eighteen-year-old, mass communication major, Calvin Pressley found out about mascot tryouts from Douglas and decided he would be the perfect mascot.

"I'm the type of person who likes to make a fool out of myself," Pressley said.

Pressley said the hours haven't been too bad for the four mascots because they split up the events fairly.

"So far it hasn't been too bad," Pressley said. "We sign up for events and there are four of us, so it is pretty spread out."

Pressley said his family was shocked yet supportive once he told them he was trying out to become the new mascot.

"They were real surprised because I didn't tell them until after I tried out," Pressley said. "They thought I was playing around at first, but they're excited and want to come down to one of the games."

This isn't new for just the mascots. Ronette Hoffart, activities coordinator, and Melissa Yip, college coordinator, are co-advisors for the squad and are learning as they go.

"It's been difficult simply for the fact that it is brand new so we're still trying to find the niche for the mustang," Yip said.

Yip said she wanted the tryouts to be a little more challenging for the mascots because she wanted them to take it seriously.

"I kind of made it a little bit more difficult because I didn't want them to waltz in here and think, 'I'm going to put on a costume and run around here like an idiot.'"

Yip knows what it is like to be in a costume. She worked at Fiesta Texas in San Antonio when she was younger.

"I've been a Looney Toon before, so it's serious to me," Yip said. "Your vision is blocked off, and you have to put up with a lot."

Since the mascots and the co-advisors are new, there are many things Yip would like to see improved.

"I have all these visions I want for the mustang, but of course being the first year and being that I'm not sure what the budget is, I don't know what we can get done right away," Yip said.

There are some other kinks in the system Yip and Hoffart are trying to work out as well.

"We don't have our own uniform," Yip said. "We have to go to the football coach and pick up the uniform at 2 o'clock sharp the Friday before the game and then immediately after the game find only him and give it straight back to him."

The first thing Yip would like to focus on is getting a special bag to hang the mascot uniform.

"My first game I went to it rained really bad and we just threw it in a box," Yip said.

"When I got home I hung him up, but it got nasty so we took it to the dry cleaners."

Director of student activities, Matthew Park said suggestion boxes for naming the new mascot would be available for the remainder of this week. A student committee will then give a proposal of the top three mustang names to the Student Government Association next Tuesday. After that, the suggestions will be sent up to the administrators.

"Hopefully we'll know by next spring," Park said.

It is clear that the mascot's job is hard work, with long hours, yet Amador said the good outweighs the bad.

"One of the last games I was at, a lady handed me her newborn baby to take a picture," Amador said. "I was so scared because I couldn't see or feel the baby, but it made me so happy because she wanted the mustang to hold her baby as they go."

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for the conference or any other MSU-sponsored function at this time. MSU will accept payments by check or money order.

"We will look for a more secure service in the future," she said. "Should we decide to offer the service again, we will probably do it through an external service like PayPal."

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