

# Cunningham signs on with Missouri Valley rodeo program



Lakin Cunningham has a long list of accomplishments when it comes to rodeo and for good reason.

She has spent most of her young life on the rodeo circuit and has loved every minute of it, along with the accolades that have come her way. It is a life she isn't ready to give up just yet.

Cunningham has always wanted rodeo in college and now she will get that chance. She recently committed to the Missouri Valley College rodeo team and found her future home.

"College has always been a goal of mine," Cunningham said. "There's never been a moment when I thought I wouldn't further my education after high school. Missouri Valley is the place that's going to make that all happen. I've always wanted to rodeo on the collegiate level in hopes that I'll make the College National Finals. Missouri Valley and coach Ken Mason are going to help my goals come true, and I can't wait to be a Viking in the fall."

As confident as Cunningham was going to rodeo in college, she didn't think Missouri Valley was going to be her eventual landing spot.

She was all set to attend Oklahoma State and major in Ag Business, but decided to change her major and become a chiropractor. The new trajectory for her future didn't fit

Oklahoma State and went to find a new stop.

Cunningham decided to give Missouri Valley a visit, and the rest as you can say, is history.



***Lakin Cunningham recently committed to Missouri Valley and its rodeo program under head coach Ken Mason.***

“My mom told me to visit MVC because it was close to home and we knew many people that have attended/are attending and love it,” Cunningham said. “When I went in October to visit, I was ready to sign after that. I fell in love with the small quiet campus, the beautiful scenery, the way that even non-rodeo kids knew the rodeo coach, the rodeo facility, and just

everything about Missouri Valley.

“The one thing that really held me back was the travel to rodeos as I have to travel as far as 13 hours one way to get to some rodeos. After my visit, my mom and coach Mason told me to go visit at least one more college to be sure MVC is where I wanted to attend. So, in November of last year, I visited South Western Oklahoma State and I loved the rodeo program and coach there, but the school just wasn’t for me. I knew in that moment that Missouri Valley is where i’ll be calling home for the next few years.”

Cunningham has one several championships during her youth and high school rodeo days, but knows the collegiate level will be more challenging.

She has found a lot of success in Barrel Racing and Goat Tying, but will try some new events as well, including Breakaway Roping.

“Rodeo is something i’ve been so passionate about for a very long time,” Cunningham said. “As those who I’ve went to school with know, I’m always gone for rodeos and not involved in school activities as much as I would be without rodeo. It’s always been my goal to rodeo in college, instead of getting my pro rodeo cars right off the bat. Reason being, Goat Tying is my best event and favorite event, and I can really only do that through college as they don’t really have many opportunities for goat tiers after college.

“In the fall I will be taking three horses with me to MVC where I will be competing in the Barrel Racing and Goat Tying event. Coach Mason also would like me to try my hand at Breakaway Roping.”

Cunningham wants to face off with the best the collegiate circuit has to offer and has high goals for herself.

“It has always been a goal of mine to make the College

National Finals Rodeo," she said. "I'm hoping to make it my freshman year, but I know that it won't be easy and I will have to really work in order to be the very best I can be. I've had a lot of accomplishments on the Junior High and High School level, but I know that the collegiate scene is way more difficult and I will have to be on my A-game in order to achieve that goal.

"I also plan to go to other big events and compete outside of just college rodeo in hopes to win more titles and more money as I progress my skills and knowledge through the coaching of Ken Mason."