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Grateful St. Louis dog owners donate \$1 million to MU veterinary school

The Associated Press

COLUMBIA | The University of Missouri's College of Veterinary Medicine gets a big boost from a St. Louis couple.

David and Gloria Lowell brought their golden retriever, Goldi, to the college's Columbia hospital in 2003 for cancer treatment. Now, the Lowells are repaying the commitment and compassion they found there with a \$1 million donation.

Officials of the vet school announced the gift Wednesday. The donation will fund two scholarships — one apiece in memory of Goldi and another of the Lowells' beloved retrievers, Honee.

Neil Olson, dean of the College of Veterinary Medicine, says the scholarships will help attract talented students to the school.

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ST. LOUIS POST-DISPATCH



Care of golden retriever prompts golden gift to MU

By Kavita Kumar

ST. LOUIS POST-DISPATCH

Monday, July 9, 2006

A St. Louis couple were so touched by the veterinary care one of their dogs received at the University of Missouri-Columbia they have donated \$1 million to fund two student scholarships at the school.

David and Gloria Lowell, who are both retired, made the gift to MU's College of Veterinary Medicine in honor of their golden retrievers — Goldi and Honee. The school will receive the money from their estate upon the couple's death.

They started taking Goldi, who had bone cancer, to MU for weekly radiation treatments in 2003.

"The wonderful people we met and the exceptional care that we received at the MU veterinary college inspired us to create these scholarships," Gloria Lowell said in a news release.

Ronald Cott, the college's director of development, said that the Lowells would sometimes leave Goldi at the hospital for brief stays during the treatments. Students would call the couple every day with reports on Goldi's progress.

Goldi and Honee both died in 2006.

Today, the Lowells own two more golden retrievers — Tori and Lola.

The Lowells attended a gift announcement on the Columbia campus Wednesday afternoon, but could not be reached later in the day.

Cott said the college often received gifts in honor of beloved pets.

"We see it quite frequently because of the human-animal bond," he said. The Lowells' donation isn't the veterinary school's largest, Cott said, but he called it "a major gift."

MU's school is one of 28 veterinary colleges in the country and the only accredited one in Missouri.



Couple honors dogs with vet school gift

By Janese Heavin

Wednesday, July 29, 2009

Advertisement

A canine-loving couple from St. Louis has pledged a \$1 million gift to establish two scholarships at the University of Missouri's College of Veterinary Medicine.

David and Gloria Lowell, both retired, are donating the funds in memory of their golden retrievers who died in 2006. The university will receive the money from their estate upon the couple's deaths.

Chancellor Brady Deaton was expected to announce the gift at a reception today. In a prepared statement, Deaton said the money will help the college increase enrollment and address a nationwide shortage of veterinarians.

"The College of Veterinary Medicine will benefit greatly from this gift; it is a privilege to have the support of generous benefactors like the Lowells," Neil Olson, dean of the college, said in a prepared statement. "These scholarships will help attract talented students to the college and expand class sizes to meet the growing demands for veterinarians."

The "David and Gloria Lowell Scholarship in Memory of Their Beloved Golden Retriever Goldi" will be awarded to veterinary medicine students who study oncology.

A second scholarship, named in memory of their golden retriever Honee, will be granted to students from rural communities who have a financial need.

David Lowell said the couple first brought Goldi to MU's veterinary hospital in 2003 upon referral from a specialist in St. Louis.

The 7-year-old dog went through a series of radiation treatments. For several weeks, Lowell said, he'd drop the dog off on Mondays and pick her up on Fridays. MU veterinary students and staff would call the couple daily with status updates, he said.

Goldi ultimately went into remission until her death.

“We had the animal for another three years, and we were grateful for that,” Lowell said. “We were highly impressed with the attitude and compassion shown by the veterinary students and the resident doctors who were supervising them.”

Honee developed lymphoma in 2006, but the cancer was too far along to treat, he said. Both dogs died within six months of one another.

Lowell said the couple decided to donate the money while planning their estate to help students with financial needs obtain higher levels of education.

“We feel MU is one of the better veterinary schools in the U.S.,” he said. “If we can help via a scholarship, we’re more than glad to do that.”

COLUMBIA MISSOURIAN

Golden retrievers memorialized in MU Veterinary Medicine scholarship

By Dani Martinson

July 30, 2009 | 12:01 a.m. CDT

COLUMBIA — Six years ago, David and Gloria Lowell of St. Louis brought their golden retriever Goldi to MU so she could be treated for cancer with radiation. That began the Lowells' friendship with the College of Veterinary Medicine.

That tie will have a lasting effect on future veterinary medicine students. Chancellor Brady Deaton announced Wednesday that the Lowells have pledged \$1 million of their estate for scholarships in memory of Goldi and her golden retriever buddy, Honee, who was brought along to Columbia when Goldi was treated.

A scholarship in memory of Goldi will go to veterinary students studying oncology, and one in memory of Honee will be awarded to students interested in the bond between humans and animals.

Preference in each scholarship category will be given to students from rural communities and to those who have financial need. It has not yet been determined how many students will receive the scholarships.

Gloria Lowell emphasized that in addition to memorializing their dogs and helping students, she and her husband are making the donation to honor the people who took care of Goldi.

"I can't say enough about them," she said. "They showed genuine care for animals and people."

The couple joined Deaton, Neil Olson, dean of the College of Veterinary Medicine, and Kevin Finn, a student, in a brief ceremony at Reynolds Alumni Center late Wednesday morning.

"We have love for all animals, especially golden retrievers," David Lowell told the gathering. "Mizzou's been great to us, and we are glad to help."

The couple has no other ties to MU and no children. "They're like my babies," Gloria Lowell said of her dogs.

Deaton said in a statement that MU's College of Veterinary Medicine is the only veterinary college in the state and one of 28 nationally. He cited a critical shortage of veterinarians in specialized areas, including rural medicine.

During the ceremony, Olson said there is a 40 percent increase in the number of incoming freshmen who intend to study veterinary medicine, up 30 students from last year for a total of 110. "The most important mission is to train the next generation of veterinarians," Olson said.

Goldi was 10 and Honee was 5 when they died eight months apart in 2006. The Lowells now have two rescue goldens, Lola and Tori. Lola has something in common with the pair who came before her: She has been trained to ring a bell when she wants to use the outdoor facilities.

But Gloria Lowell said Tori, who spent her first 2 1/2 years locked in a laundry room before she was rescued, hasn't learned the trick yet. "Tori didn't know she was a golden retriever when we got her," she said. "She didn't know how to swim and was very introverted, which is uncommon for golden retrievers."



NFL goes overboard on Vick

By Steve Walentik

Wednesday, July 29, 2009

Advertisement

There should have been more outrage earlier this week when NFL Commissioner Roger Goodell allowed former Atlanta Falcons quarterback Michael Vick back into the league.

It should have come not from Vick opponents, but from everybody else.

That's because the commissioner granted Vick's reinstatement — after two years out of football for his involvement of an illegal dogfighting operation — only conditionally, with the stipulation that he'll have to sit out as many as five games serving a league-mandated suspension. As though those two years — 18 months of which were spent in federal prison — weren't already enough time served?

★ "I think it's ridiculous," said David Mitchell, an associate law professor at Missouri who has done extensive research on felon disenfranchisement and has written about Vick's case. ★ "With the five-game suspension, here's a man who is now bankrupt. Here's a man who spent two years in a federal penitentiary, who had to give up his signing bonus, who had to do all these things. How much more do you want?"

As Mitchell noted, there are already plenty of obstacles hindering Vick's ability to earn a living doing what he does best.

Start with the fact that Vick's ability to play quarterback at a championship level was already in doubt before his role in Bad Newz Kennels was made public in 2007. Add concerns about whether the 29-year-old's skills have eroded during his time away. Then consider that any team that chooses to sign Vick will do so with the knowledge that People for the Ethical Treatment of Animals is going to schedule a protest outside the stadium the first time he takes the field.

"Animal-rights groups have found something to latch onto to make this a national issue about an underground, a subculture activity of dogfighting — which is an important issue to address and sort of counter," Mitchell said. "But what they did was they took it and they acted almost as if he was the only one ever to have done this. So now he becomes the face of what dogfighting is, and it's only because of class, because here's a wealthy athlete.

“If it was Joe Shmoe who had like \$5 to his name, PETA wouldn’t have been protesting.”

It’s also true that Ray Lewis, guilty of obstruction of justice in a murder investigation, and Leonard Little, guilty of manslaughter while driving drunk, weren’t as omnipresent in the national headlines as Vick. Odds are, we’ll be able to say the same about Donte’ Stallworth, who spent 24 days in jail for his own manslaughter conviction in a drunk-driving incident and could be allowed back into football at some point this season.

Makes you wonder if our society’s values aren’t a little out of whack. Sure, Vick’s crimes were heinous, they were premeditated and he lied about them repeatedly, but they still weren’t committed against other human beings.

But the truth is that the NFL’s punishment might not be as punitive as his home state of Virginia’s, which gets to the heart of Mitchell’s research and expertise.

Vick, as a felon, is denied the right to vote, to hold public office or to serve on a jury. It will be at least five years before he can apply to the governor to have those rights restored, and he first must pay all costs and fines associated with his conviction, avoid any new charges for three years and not be convicted of a DWI for five years.

“It’s almost a parallel situation with the NFL and with the felon exclusion laws,” Mitchell said, “in that after the individual has served their time, they’ve been released, both are exacting additional punishments after the legal system has already said the person is punished.”

Sounds pretty outrageous.

Stimulus money boosts MU's work study program

By David Goldstein

July 30, 2009 | 12:01 a.m. CDT

COLUMBIA — **MU's work study program received more than \$300,000 in stimulus funds for 2009-10, allowing the university** to offer more students an opportunity to participate in the program.

The stimulus money has helped offset the nearly \$130,000 loss in funding MU's work study program experienced since last year.

Work study is a federally subsidized program in which universities hire students for campus jobs to help them pay their tuition. Students are chosen to participate in the program on the basis of financial need. The federal government pays 75 percent of the student's wages, and the university pays for the remaining 25 percent.

Including the stimulus money the university received, MU's 2009-10 work study program was allocated a little more than \$1.5 million in federal funds versus the \$1.36 million it was given in 2008-09. Including MU's match, the total for this coming year is about \$1.9 million versus about \$1.7 million last year.

Financial Aid Director Jim Brooks said the stimulus money has allowed the university to offer 66 more students an award from last year. Although that's not a large increase, Brooks said he anticipates a greater percentage of students will accept the offer than in previous years, which is where the difference will be seen.

"I think with the economy the way it is, more people are exploring options," Brooks said.

Last year, out of 1,630 students who were made offers by MU, 1,200 students accepted the work study award. This year the university offered 1,696 students work study award packages.

Brooks said the university always offers more awards than it has money to give, anticipating that not all students will accept the awards or use the full amount. This year, he said, the university has over-awarded about half a million dollars.

“If all the students accept their awards, then we would have to determine how to cover the overexpenditure,” Brooks said, though he does not expect that to happen.

Students who applied to the program for the first time received an average award of \$1,200 in 2009, meaning they can earn up to that much money for the next academic year. Continuing students, who typically see an increase in awards from their freshman to sophomore year, received an average award of \$2,200.

Despite the boost provided in stimulus money, that number is down from last year when first-time students were awarded an average of \$1,500 per academic year.

Because of the 16 percent increase in Free Applications for Federal Student Aid that MU received, Brooks said the university decreased the freshman award amounts to ensure there would be enough money available for continuing students.

MU’s increase in FAFSA applications reflects a national trend. Last year the number of FAFSA applications rose nationally by 12 percent, according to the U.S. Department of Education.

Although the university decreased the average award amount for first-year students, there was not enough money for all students who received awards last year to be funded this year as well.

The university’s work-study program didn’t fund MU senior Gina Eygenhuysen this year, despite the fact that she was awarded money through the program for the past two years and said her financial situation has not improved.

“I was kind of startled,” Eygenhuysen said. “If anything, our financial situation is worse.”

It’s worse, she said, because now her parents must pay for her brother to go to college

and for her father to go back to school to get his master's degree.

Eygenhuysen said she is even more baffled because her brother, who will be a freshman next year, was offered a work study award and she was not. He declined the money because he is not going to MU.

Brooks said the qualification criteria have not changed since last year and that no preference is given to incoming freshman.

Getting a job through work study is better than getting an off-campus job, Eygenhuysen said, because students can work in a field related to their major and employers are more understanding of class schedules.

Brooks said the work study program is a win-win situation for the university and students because students get good real-world experience and the university does not have to spend as much money to pay its student employees.

Students who do not receive offers for work-study can be put on a wait list if more funds become available. Eygenhuysen said she hopes there will be enough funds left for her to receive an offer.

"I was depending on the money from that job," she said.

Brooks said one option would be to lower the award amounts and distribute them to more people, but that presents problems.

"If you cut the award amounts too small, people will go look for jobs elsewhere," he said, "because it's just not worth their time."

THE CHRONICLE

of Higher Education

• Thursday, July 30, 2009

Students Fare Better in States With Fewer, Larger Public Colleges, Study Finds

States with fragmented public higher-education systems should "consolidate their resources into fewer, larger universities," argues a working paper by **Cory Koedel, an assistant professor of economics at the University of Missouri at Columbia**. The paper says that, several years after graduation, people who attended college in states with a small number of large flagships earned higher wages than people who attended college in states with many small public four-year colleges.