MOREnet lures Iowa expert

New director noted for tech expertise.

By Janese Heavin

Wednesday, December 23, 2009

The director of an Iowa communications network is moving to Columbia to take the helm of the Missouri Research & Education Network.

John Gillispie

John Gillispie will replace Bill Mitchell, the University of Missouri System informational technology guru who helped develop MOREnet. Under the helm of the University of Missouri System, the shared network connects colleges, K-12 schools, libraries and governments across the state.

Gillispie is executive director of the Iowa Communications Network, a state-owned fiber-optic network that provides distance learning, videoconferencing, telemedicine and other services to residents. He also serves as chief operating officer for the Information Technology Enterprise of the Iowa Department of Administrative Services.

Gary Allen, vice president for information and technology at the UM System, says Gillispie’s background makes him a good fit for MOREnet.

“John’s got a deep technical background, and he’s got a lot of executive experience in his work with the state of Iowa over the last seven years,” Allen said. “He understands the tech aspects
and the value of the network and how that is so important to the broad constituents that MOREnet serves.”

Gillispie said he’s excited about the new position.

“My first goal is to get familiar with the network and understand the ins and outs,” he said. “I also want to work hard to get the legislature to restore funding and confirm its value to the citizens of Missouri.”

In October, Gov. Jay Nixon announced he would cut $204 million from this year’s budget, including $3.06 million from MOREnet.

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Nixon appoints Columbians to posts

By Terry Ganey

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Gov. Jay Nixon has appointed three Columbia residents to state boards and commissions.

Tracy Gonzalez was reappointed to the Child Abuse and Neglect Review Board. Christopher Egbert was named to the Corrections Officer Certification Commission. Letitia Thomas was picked for the Missouri Family Trust Board of Trustees.

The Child Abuse and Neglect Review Board gives independent reviews of child abuse and neglect findings when the alleged perpetrator disagrees with the decision of the state Division of Family Services.

Gonzalez is assistant dean at the University of Missouri School of Law and previously served as director of the Child Protection Clinic there. She also was an assistant Boone County prosecuting attorney.

The Corrections Officer Certification Commission advises on policy related to training, qualifications and testing for corrections workers. Egbert is a retired manager with the state Department of Corrections. He previously served as a manager in the Missouri Department of Public Safety's Peace Officer Standards and Training Program. Egbert is a former captain in the Columbia Police Department.

The Missouri Family Trust board is supposed to provide people who have a mental or physical disability with a better quality of life through funds from the Missouri Family Trust. Thomas is a project director at the University of Missouri-Kansas City and previously was the director of the adult day health care program run by the MU School of Health Professions.

All of the appointments, which were announced yesterday, are for terms that end in 2012.
UM news

By Janese Heavin

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Some UM-related news of interest:

* The Las Cruces Sun-News reports that the last days of former UM System President Manuel Pacheco at New Mexico State University have been "busy, busy busy." Pacheco has spent seven months as interim president of the university. He retired from the UM System in 2003. Check out the story here.

* The Missouri Innovation Park, which includes a 20-acre "Mizzou Center" building, is celebrating its first year of development, the Blue Springs Examiner reports. The Mizzou Center is scheduled to be the first building to open, possibly next year. "Within those 20 acres, university officials said there will be basic animal and human research, similar to what the university engages in currently. There is also a planned technology transfer component, or a licensing associate that will license inventions created by companies within the park, who will then market the product," the newspaper said. The story is here.

* "Little" Jimmy Winklemann -- hey, don't blame me that's what his attorney calls him -- is challenging his giant nemesis The North Face to match his donations to St. Louis Children's Hospital, the Courthouse News Service blog reports. You'll recall, North Face filed a trademark infringement lawsuit against the MU freshman for his parody clothing line, The South Butt. Apparently, The South Butt apparently is donating South Butt merchandise to patients at St. Louis Children's Hospital. In a press release, Winkelmann's attorney, Albert Watkins, was quoted as saying: "St. Louis Children's Hospital is on the cutting edge of the world's medical exploration of cures and treatments for children, something we hope will strike a chord with a company that couches its products with the tag line, 'Never Stop Exploring' and holds itself out as a socially conscious concern." The Courthouse News Service blog post is here.

* In the Tribune yesterday, business editor Justin Willett reported that the defense appropriations bill included $5 million (secured by Sen. Kit Bond) to support the Columbia-based NanoTechnology Enterprise Consortium. The consortium was formed in January to develop...
products for industrial and military use, including the defense, biomedical, energy and agriculture sectors. Last year, Bond worked with the University of Missouri and the Army to initiate the process to form the consortium, Willett said. Read that story here.

*And on a personal note, Merry Christmas!*