The Tribune's View

Business incubator at MU self-sufficient

Monday, February 22, 2010

Editor, the Tribune: The statement in your newspaper that University of Missouri President Gary Forsee provided $5 million to the MU Life Science Business Incubator is false.

The business incubator does not receive operating funds from the university.

The business incubator reached break-even shortly after opening and continues to operate ahead of plan and in the black. We are concerned that later this year the facility will be close to full. We have begun planning ahead for construction of a Phase II expansion of the facility so that we can continue to accommodate the increased volume of new ventures by university and community entrepreneurs.

This is a tremendously exciting time for the entrepreneurs of Columbia.

Jake Halliday

President and CEO Missouri Innovation Center

1601 S. Providence Road
Stimulus funds push health records effort forward

By T.J. Greaney

Monday, February 22, 2010

Correction appended

Missouri received an early federal stamp of approval last week on its plans to create a statewide health information exchange — an electronic network where patient medical records can be securely updated and transferred between providers.

Proponents jokingly refer to the effort to create the exchange without slowing down patient care as “changing the tires at 65 miles an hour.” For now, it appears to be on track to meet aggressive benchmarks.

Last week, Missouri got news that it is set to receive $13.8 million in federal stimulus money to aid its move from paper to electronic files; $1 million of that total is available immediately for planning.

The effort is led by the Department of Social Services under an office known as the Missouri Office of Health Information Technology, or MO-HITECH, created in November by an executive order by Gov. Jay Nixon.

Missouri plans to submit an operational plan to the federal government by May 31, and patients could begin to see electronic prescriptions and electronic access to lab results become much more common as soon as 2011.

The grant money announced last week is designed to create the road map for the information exchange state officials hope to have up and running by 2013. That system will allow hospitals and providers to unlock federal dollars from Medicare and Medicaid to upgrade their own computer systems and harmonize them with the statewide exchange.

DSS Director Ron Levy said the push for electronic records is about improving patient care and efficiency. “There’s an opportunity here over time to improve quality and reduce cost, which is huge,” Levy said. “It will take awhile, but if you think about the potential it has to avoid duplicate testing … and if you think about the access to information in an emergency setting that might help improve care delivery, there’s tremendous benefits.”

Leaders said it is important that people who want to express concerns about the medical information exchange speak up now. “This is not a maybe; this is going to happen,” said
Karen Edison, chairwoman of University of Missouri’s Department of Dermatology and a leader in MU’s effort to become the state’s “regional center,” which will coordinate the exchange of information between 70 regions across the state. “So if people have opinions about it and care about it, they need to get involved now.”

Missouri is one of the few states to include a separate workgroup on “consumer engagement” where patients are encouraged to voice concerns about issues ranging from privacy to accessibility. The next meeting will be from 11:30 a.m. to 1:30 p.m. Wednesday at 205 Jefferson St. in Jefferson City. A full schedule of meetings is available at dss.mo.gov/hie.

Edison said Missouri’s lack of electronic health records leads to potentially dangerous situations — for instance, a patient from Columbia who is taken to the I-70 Medical Center in Sweet Springs after a traffic accident. “They wouldn’t easily know what medications you can take, what your allergies are,” she said. “There’s a real need for information exchange in the acute setting.”

Edison also said the exchange will eliminate the need for patients to fill out medical history forms each time they visit a new doctor’s office. And perhaps most vital, Edison said, the exchange would help prevent wasteful and potentially harmful replication of care.

“I, as a doctor, have to admit that I sometimes redo lab work that I know they’ve had recently,” Edison said. “But sometimes people come from great distances, and if I can’t get my hands on that lab work,” there’s no other option.

This page has been revised to reflect the following correction:

SECOND THOUGHTS

A story about health information exchanges misstated the role of the Regional Coordinator position. The University of Missouri which is applying to be Missouri’s Regional Coordinator for the exchange would serve in a role of providing technical assistance, training and outreach. It will not be a central storage point for health information as was implied in the story. Additionally, the 70 RC positions referenced in the story are nationwide, not statewide.

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University officials will try to resolve scholarship fight

By Virginia Young
Post-Dispatch Jefferson City Bureau

JEFFERSON CITY — Ten university officials, representing public and private institutions, will seek middle ground in the increasingly bitter war over Access Missouri scholarships.

Higher Education Commissioner Robert Stein appointed the working group today and promised to convene a meeting within three weeks.

The debate stems from the different way the state scholarship program treats students at public and private universities.

Access Missouri is the state’s $95 million needs-based scholarship program, designed to help low- and middle-income families pay for college. Currently, students at private four-year universities can receive more than twice as much — up to $4,600 — as those at public universities — $2,150.

Legislators are considering bills pushed by Gov. Jay Nixon to equalize the scholarships at $2,850. A hearing on the Senate bill drew a packed room of college students last week.

Stein said in a statement that the working group should consider factors other than type of institution.

“For example, different award amounts could be given based on the level of coursework taken i.e., lower or upper-division. Another approach could provide higher award levels to students attending institutions with higher graduation rates,” he said.

The working group, which is tilted toward public institutions, includes eight university presidents: Gary Forsee, University of Missouri; Carolyn Mahoney, Lincoln University; Mike Nietzel, Missouri State University; Don Claycomb, Linn State Technical College; John
McGuire, St. Charles Community College; Neil Nuttall, North Central Missouri College; Barney Forsythe, Westminster College; and Marianne Inman, Central Methodist College.

Rounding out the group are Rose Windmiller, director of state relations and local government affairs at Washington University, and Carla Chance, vice chancellor of finance at St. Louis Community College.

Asked who would chair the meetings, a spokeswoman for Stein said: “Dr. Stein will facilitate — no chair.”

Tags: Access Missouri, financial aid, Jay Nixon, Robert Stein, scholarships, Virginia Young
MUPD investigating assault near Pickard Hall

*MUPD has not gained new information regarding the case since Friday.*

By Alicia Stice

Published Feb. 23, 2010

The MU Police Department is investigating an assault reported at the southwest corner of Pickard Hall, an MUPD news release stated.

Investigators believe the assault occurred around 9 p.m. last Thursday. Officers responded shortly after 9 p.m., the release stated.

The victim said there could be two suspects. According to the news release, he told investigators he was walking on the sidewalk toward the Francis Quadrangle when he was pushed from behind. He attempted to turn around, and he fell to the ground, where his attacker or attackers proceeded to kick him, the release stated.

The victim said the suspect or suspects then fled the area, and he believes they ran toward the Domino's Pizza on Ninth Street, according to the release. None of the victim's personal property was taken during the assault.

According to the release, no additional suspect details are available at this time.

The victim suffered minor injuries during the assault and was transported to University Hospital for treatment, the release stated.

MUPD Capt. Brian Weimer said police department officers are interviewing people and gathering evidence in connection with the case.

"There have been no developments in the case since the news release was sent out (last Friday)," Weimer said.

The news release about the incident was sent out in a university-wide e-mail in accordance with the Jeanne Clery Disclosure of Campus Security Policy and Campus Crimes Statistics Act of 1998.

Junior Brittany Martensen said she became aware of the assault through the e-mail sent out by MUPD. Martensen said she still feels safe on campus but usually doesn't walk alone at night.
"It's not that often that things like that happen on campus." Martensen said.

Anyone with information about this investigation can call Crime Stoppers at 875-8477 and anonymously leave tips. People can also submit tips online at 875tips.com.
Res. Life copes with enrollment nearing capacity

New regulations would keep freshmen from living at extended campus.

By Rachel Allred

Published Feb. 23, 2010

MU has faced record enrollment two of the last three years, and students have started to notice space tightening where they live, eat and go to class. In this first part of a four-part series, The Maneater focuses on residence halls and what the university has done to accommodate the growing student population.

The Department of Residential Life is continuing to formulate plans to ensure there is enough space for students who want to be part of campus living.

According to the Office of the Registrar, total enrollment has been steadily increasing the past several years and has reached record highs. Between 2007 and 2008, the university saw a 6.1 percent increase in enrollment. Between 2008 and 2009, the enrollment grew 3.7 percent.

Along with other campus departments, Residential Life has had to make changes to accommodate the growth.

The Residence Halls Association passed a resolution Feb. 8 to encourage the administration and student leadership groups to work together in finding a way to accommodate all students. RHA Parliamentarian Jared Grafman, a Maneater staff member, presented the bill.

"This is basically saying that we as residents realize that there's a problem and we'd like to discuss what the university is planning on doing to help," Grafman said.

Residential Life Director Frankie Minor said the demand of campus living space in the '90s exceeded the supply, and MU rented rooms from a vacated residence hall at Stephens College.

Minor said Residential Life rented space from Stephens three or four times, and in most instances students were living on MU campus by the end of September. Usually 30 to 40 students were housed at Stephens' Hillcrest Hall, but one year, nearly 200 students lived there.

After Residential Life quit renting space at Stephens, some students stayed in temporary room assignments on campus until permanent assignments were available.
"In more recent years when we were short 30 to 40 spaces we've placed students in with student staff members," Minor said.

Between the fall and spring semesters, Minor said 8 to 9 percent of student residents move out for various reasons including graduation, withdrawal or to study abroad. Several contracts are canceled at the beginning at the semester.

"We have our high tide on opening day," Minor said. "We always have a number of students for whom we're holding contracts. Some students arrive and withdraw or transfer shortly thereafter. We tend to have about 40 to 60 students who are either no shows, cancel or withdraw within the first few weeks of school."

This creates ample room to accommodate spring semester students, Minor said. The increase of space enabled about 450 students to be relocated from Gillett Hall, which is closed this semester for renovations.

Senior Morgan Diehl, who lives at Tiger Diggis, said living space isn't used strategically and it causes frustration.

"It looks like they have plenty of space, but they don't utilize the space like they should," Diehl said. "At Tiger Diggis, most of the apartments hold four people but only three people are living in them. It's great for the people living there, but it makes problems for everyone else."

Residential Life typically houses about 30 percent of the undergraduate population, Minor said, and about 6,500 students are living in residential life housing. Twenty-two residence halls, Mizzou Quads and Tiger Diggis are available to students this semester, but new restrictions will soon be implemented.

"We will deal with some of this excessive demand by offering some extended campus housing, but restricting that just to returning students," Minor said.

Minor said there would be about 240 spaces available at extended campus next year as opposed to the nearly 600 currently available.

Diehl said this regulation will be beneficial to both under and upperclassmen.

"I think that's a great idea because my observation with most freshmen is that if they get off campus they think they're more toward the top dogs and act more irresponsible," Diehl said. "They need to get in the groove of things before living off campus. For seniors and juniors, extended campus is a great way for them to focus on their studies."

Although freshmen will be restricted from living at extended campus, fewer returning students will be allowed to live on campus. That will be necessary because there's a large drop-off in capacity — from 7,347 beds to 6,451 — for the first time since the 2004 to 2005 academic year. Since that year there has been a steady rise in both capacity and average semester occupancy.
"We're restricting the number of returning students who otherwise might want to come back to campus housing," Minor said. "We need to reserve space for new students."

Grafman said he's concerned about the number of students who might not be able to live in residence halls, especially because changed guidelines for Residents' Online Access to Rooms, which is used by returning students who want to live in residence halls again.

"We've restructured ROAR and are having to turn away students from residence halls," Grafman said.

Students who have disciplinary problems will have lower priority next semester as well. Minor said the original suggestion to restrict students for conduct reasons came from RHA, and Residential Life figured out the logistics. Students who this regulation applies to recently received notification.

"We sent an e-mail to any of those students who are living with us who are on university or residential probation because of their conduct, letting them know that although they will be permitted to live on campus, they will be moved to the bottom of the priority list," Minor said.

Minor said the increase in demand for residential space is short-term.

"What we're experiencing is a temporary phenomenon," Minor said. "If you look at the history, we've always had sufficient capacity. We've just experienced some things in the last few years where we've had a significantly higher demand."
University Bookstore ranked second in overall profit and first in percentage of used books sold to students in a nationwide survey conducted by Large Stores Group earlier this month.

The survey used sales statistics from fiscal year 2008, the last year University Bookstore was located in Brady Commons before making the switch to the student center. According to the Large Stores Group Web site, 86 four-year universities with at least $9 million in annual revenue were included in the rankings.

University Bookstore finished second only to the University of California-Los Angeles in total profits.

"It's interesting that a Midwest bookstore can be so competitive when you're going up against schools like UCLA," Student Auxiliary Services spokeswoman Michelle Froese said. "It speaks highly of our own bookstore to see that we can."

Froese said sales of particular merchandise especially contributed to the bookstore's profits.

"Our most profitable items are clothing and gift items," Frose said. "They're not too labor intensive, whereas computers and electronic devices usually require a lot of staff."

Frose said the main factor for the bookstore's high profits is finding the right gross margin.

"If it's too high, you're not going to sell anything," Froese said. "If it's too low, you're not making any money. I think we're successful because we find the right balance."

Bookstores for the University of Texas, Arizona State University, Brigham Young University and the University of Minnesota rounded out the top five in the percentage of used books sold. Froese said MU's bookstore had finished high in the survey's rankings in past years but never first.

"We've been in the top 10 for a few years, and we were in second for a couple years, but this is the first time we've been named No. 1," Froese said.
Froese cited statistics from 2009 as proof of University Bookstore's more than average used book sales.

"Of all of the course books we sell in fiscal year, the percentage of used to new books is higher than any other store in LSG survey," Froese said. "In fiscal year 2009, our used book percentage was 40.5 percent. The LSG national average is 28.3 percent."

Froese said making more used books available to students is a priority for the bookstore.

"We have no control over prices of new textbooks — there's nothing we can do about them," Froese said. "But we can offer used books at a cheaper price."

The Missouri Students Association passed legislation in December promoting the purchasing of used books.

"The resolution just showed that we had looked into it and that there were obvious advantages of buying used books for students," said Macy Pruitt, MSA Academic Affairs committee vice chairman. "They're just generally cheaper — almost always cheaper — and that's something that I think students should care about and should take advantage of."
Peace Corps offers info session at MU

The Peace Corps will host an information session for anyone interested in volunteering for them. The session will be at 6 p.m. on March 2 in the basement level of the Student Success Center at MU.

Mike Burden, a Peace Corps recruiter, will show a short video, discuss the application process and talk about the benefits of service.

March 1 marks the 49th anniversary of the Peace Corps, as well as the start of the week-long celebration known as Peace Corps Week.

— Dana Kimpton
MU to debut iPhone app

Provost Brian Foster approved funding through the IT fee.

By Abbey Sussell

Published Feb. 23, 2010

The push for an MU iPhone application that started with the Missouri Students Association is now in the hands of the Division of Information Technology.

Provost Brian Foster approved funding for the MU smart phone application through the Application Services budget in January. Students pay for this funding through their IT fee, said Kevin Bailey, Division of Information Technology director of customer service and support.

"Last summer we tried to develop strategic plans on how to invest the IT fee in support of learning and teaching," Bailey said. "Everything is going mobile these days and mobile devices are where a lot of growth is."

Missouri Students Association President Tim Noce proposed the idea for an MU iPhone application in April 2009, but until last month, there was no definite funding plan.

The application would possibly include a map of campus, a calendar of events and access to myZou, Noce said. Other options for the application are a live feed for KCOU/88.1 FM, an RSS feed for the athletics department and local news updates. The application would likely be available for free.

"The application is a really good resource," Noce said. "You can get all the information about stuff to do at Mizzou in the palm of your hand. In the past, students would have to go to Jesse Hall and wait in line to sign up for classes, but now that could be done from your phone."

Noce said funding the application is a step toward making MU a more mobile campus.

"Everything has become more on-the-go and more mobile," Noce said. "Every day there is a new way to receive information on your phone. That is the direction I feel a lot of stuff is going. In the future, anything will be able to be done from your phone."

Application Services, a division of DoIT, is working on the production of the application, principle database programmer Ali Merayyan said.
DoIT is expanding the application and creating a platform compatible with major mobile devices. The MU mobile application will not only be compatible with iPhones, but also Blackberrys, Nokias and Windows smart phones.

"The main goal is to give students access to more information," Merayyan said. "Mobile devices are catching up as the device to use to access data."

Noce got ideas for the MU mobile application from other universities with existing mobile applications. The University of Texas, Duke University and Stanford University are among the colleges with iPhone applications.

"Another thing that pushed me to work on the application was I learned there was an iPhone application class here at Mizzou," Noce said.

DoIT is aiming to have the first version of the mobile application available by next fall, Merayyan said.
Student leaders aim to educate on alcohol polices

It has been 10 years since Greek Life changed alcohol policies.

By Megan Pearl

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Student leaders met with Wellness Resource Center Director Kim Dude to discuss alcohol policies on campus and in Greek Life.

"We're looking to address the dry campus issue and Greektown being dry," Missouri Students Association President Tim Noce said. "I know there is a lot of confusion as to why we can drink on football game days or events."

Noce organized the meeting, and Panhellenic Association President Caitlin Mundschenk and MSA Director of Student Communications Andy Chambers attended.

Members of the Interfraternity Council and Residence Halls Association were unable to attend due to scheduling conflicts, Noce said.

Every two years the Missouri government asks the university to review its alcohol policies and their effectiveness, Noce said.

As of right now, the policy states there is no alcohol allowed on campus unless the chancellor gives permission. Generally, this applies to the six or seven home football game days and any other event the chancellor approves.

This year marks the 10-year anniversary of Greek Life changing its policies to mandate members to stop drinking in the houses and require a third party vendor, Chambers said.

"If you talk to anyone in Greek Life, the policies they've put in place have benefited Greek Life as a whole," Chambers said.

The three agreed bringing the drinking age down or taking away the dry campus rules was not the agenda of the meeting. They aim to facilitate group meetings to educate students on the subject of alcohol policies and feel it is better to have student representatives involved rather than not, Chambers said.
"The majority of the policies in place for the Greek community are set by the chapter," Mundschenk said. "As far as PHA goes, all chapters are substance and alcohol free."

There have not been any issues regarding the alcohol policies and Greek Life, Mundschenk said. Greek houses in Greektown and on College Avenue are not considered to be on campus, and their drinking policies come from the PHA and IFC governing bodies.

"They've talked about doing a series of discussion sessions from different aspects of the campus," Mundschenk said. Noce said he has encountered many students who are discontent with the alcohol policies but does not necessarily have a specific agenda other than getting students involved in the discussion.

During the town hall meeting held to discuss lowering the drinking age earlier this semester, Dude presented information suggesting an increase in safety since the 21-year-old drinking age was established. After the meeting, a majority of students in attendance voted in agreement with the drinking age laws.

"This has nothing to do with bringing the drinking age down," Noce said. "I felt that the undertone of it was the policies we have set up and that the status quo isn't working."
Letter to the Editor:

MU gives veterans credit

By Daniel E. Sewell, Mizzou Student Veterans Association former president

Published Feb. 23, 2010

I want to thank everyone on the Faculty Council for approving the recommendation from Professor Tom Phillips, Dr. Anne Korschgen, and the rest of the Military Transfer Credit Task Force. This act will acknowledge prior military education and training as legitimate academic credit here at MU. Although it was a long deliberative process, I have always felt that this is one of the most beneficial measures that would assist in aiding veteran's transition here to the University of Missouri.

Further, I would also like to acknowledge the administration, faculty, staff, and students that have worked with our organization to help MU become a veteran-friendly campus; none of the progress that has been made would have been possible without their assistance and support. I feel that the University of Missouri has set itself apart in becoming a veteran-friendly campus, not only within the state of Missouri, but also throughout the U.S. as well. MU is continually looked at as the model of what other universities and colleges strive for when determining what is best for veterans returning to campus.

In return, I have always expressed to the members of the Mizzou Student Veterans Association (MSVA) the importance of giving back not only to the university community, which has given so much to us, but also to give and serve our local community.

Veterans tend to be a unique subset of the student population on a campus. That being said, we are not a group that is defined by race, creed, color, or gender, but rather are defined by our individual experiences. These experiences, as well as our willingness to serve, allow for opportunities to help others around us.

I have always encouraged all veterans not to isolate themselves from the University, but rather to become involved with the students and faculty on campus. In turn, this has fostered relationships around campus that have helped returning veterans to deal with the difficulty of transitioning back into civilian life. I am confident that as the time pasts, and as veterans continue to return to civilian life, others around campus will continue to aid veterans in this transition process.

Finally, I would like to personally thank Chancellor Brady Deaton for having the foresight to root out the issues that veterans face and then dealing with these issues head on. I would also like to thank Dr. Jim Spain, Dr. Cathy Scroggs, Dr. Phil Deming, as well as everyone within Student
Activities, Enrollment Management, Financial Aid, MSA/GPC, and the many others, too many to name, that have personally invested their time and effort with assisting veterans here at Mizzou.

I am continually reminded by student-veterans how happy and thankful they are with all that Mizzou has done and is continually doing for them.