As the Big 12 worries, Huskers are set to leap

By BLAIR KERKHOFF

The Kansas City Star

The University of Nebraska is standing at the edge of a dramatic shift in the college sports landscape that could end the Big 12 Conference and leave Kansas, Kansas State and possibly even Missouri out of a major conference.

Numerous media reports indicated Wednesday that the Cornhuskers will be extended an invitation to join the Big Ten. That could happen as early as Friday when the university’s Board of Regents meets in Lincoln.

Missouri, at the center of expansion speculation almost from the day the Big Ten announced its plans six months ago, has not heard from the Big Ten, according to a source close to a member of the University of Missouri system’s Board of Curators.

The board is scheduled to meet today and Friday in Columbia.

Missouri athletic director Mike Alden could not confirm whether Nebraska was headed to the Big Ten or whether MU will receive an offer to join.

“We hear speculation about all these things that are out there,” Alden told The Star. “We’ve chosen from a professional standpoint, and we think from a respectful standpoint, really to stay away from commenting on all these types of things that could be based in fact, might not be based in fact, could be rumor, could be speculation.”

It remains uncertain how many teams the Big Ten might add — one, three or five. Commissioner Jim Delany said this week that his conference “could act and act again,” keeping the door open for future invitations to other schools.

Notre Dame is considered the Big Ten’s top choice, with Missouri, Rutgers and Syracuse also in the mix.

Alden said he understood the growing concern on the part of Tigers fans that their school not only wouldn’t be part of the Big Ten, but might not have a Big 12 to call home. Speculation persists that the Cornhuskers’ departure could trigger a mass exodus of schools, mostly from the South Division, to the Pacific-10 Conference.
"There's always going to be a fear component that goes along with your fan base," Alden said.

Would Nebraska's departure mean the end of the Big 12?

Perhaps not immediately, a source close to the Big 12 office told The Star on Wednesday.

"If the idea is the Big 12 loses Nebraska, which would prompt Texas to leave, you have to think about that," the source said. "If you're Texas, what would be the hurry?"

Texas, as the conference's richest and most influential member, has the luxury of choosing its destination. The Longhorns would like Nebraska to stay in the Big 12 because both teams have historically powerful and nationally prominent football programs. But if Nebraska leaves, the Big 12 could try to replace it with another worthy football opponent.

If that doesn't appeal to Texas, a lucrative offer from the Pac-10 is reportedly waiting. The Longhorns and five other Big 12 schools could help form a 16-team superconference that would dominate all major television markets west of the Mississippi River.

A Pac-10 official told the Los Angeles Times on Wednesday that expansion is "locked and loaded." Also on Wednesday, according to Orangebloods.com, a website devoted to University of Texas sports, Longhorn coaches were told by athletic director DeLoss Dodds that the Big 12 couldn't be saved.

Although Nebraska appears to be the key to Texas' next move, the two schools have had issues with each other since the Big 12 formed in the mid-1990s. At the time, the Cornhuskers were kingpins of the Big Eight and football national champions in 1994 and 1995, but now Texas is the school often perceived as having too much power.

The Cornhuskers would reap a financial windfall for athletics and academics in the Big Ten, which distributes revenue evenly among its schools, unlike the Big 12. The conference is expected to pay each member about $20 million for the 2009-10 school year, mostly from television contracts that include the Big Ten Network.

The Big 12 has told its schools the conference soon will be in a position to land new television contracts that will provide more than $8 million to $12 million per school that will be paid this year.

But if the Big 12 disbands — if Nebraska's departure triggers an exodus by Texas, Texas A&M, Oklahoma, Oklahoma State, Texas Tech and either Baylor or Colorado — the remaining schools may not have an option in a high-paying conference.

That group includes Kansas, Kansas State, Iowa State, Baylor or Colorado and perhaps Missouri, if it is not included in Big Ten expansion.

Financially, the dropoff is significant. The Big 12 distributed a total of $139 million in revenue from TV deals, bowl games and NCAA basketball tournament appearances.
A possible destination for the displaced Big 12 schools such as the Mountain West, which has schools in Texas, Colorado and other states that border the Big 12, distributed $26.5 million from the same sources.

For Nebraska, membership in the Big Ten would end more than a century of association with schools such as Kansas and Kansas State. The football series between the Cornhuskers and Jayhawks is the longest uninterrupted series in NCAA history; the teams have met for 104 straight years.

Senators Sam Brownback and Pat Roberts of Kansas urged Nebraska to stay put.

"We have a rich and storied tradition together, and our futures together are assured to be great," Brownback said. "Friends and family on both sides of the Nebraska and Kansas border travel back and forth to games, with some kids living in one state and going to school in the other. To potentially break those ties goes beyond football and beyond academics. It's about family in many cases."

Roberts: "If it ain't broke, don't fix it. And it ain't broke."

On Friday, it may be more apparent just how broken the Big 12 really is.
Amid bubbling uncertainty about its future conference affiliation, heightened by reports that the University of Nebraska is about to leave the Big 12 for the Big Ten, the University of Missouri Board of Curators will convene for two days of regularly scheduled meetings today in Columbia, Mo.

Although the topic is not on the public agenda, the board is expected to discuss the rapidly changing college athletic scene in closed session today — including the matter of where Missouri will end up.

The school, considered a prospective expansion target of the Big Ten, faces a June 17 deadline to pledge its loyalty to the Big 12, which is trying to solidify its future with the potential loss of Nebraska and a pending offer from the Pac-10 Conference to six of its members, including Texas and Oklahoma.

Whether Mizzou's prolonged silence on the prospect of joining the Big Ten — and thereby substantially enhancing its athletic revenue and academic standing — is a reflection of discretion or of having nothing in hand to discuss remains a matter of conjecture to all but a select few. The chancellor's office and athletic department declined to comment again Wednesday.

But the meetings come as months of expansion speculation, spurred by the Big Ten's announcement in December that it was exploring doing so, seem to be yielding to actual developments.

Just three weeks after Big Ten Commissioner Jim Delany said a decision on expansion was months away, Nebraska apparently intends to accept an offer to join the Big Ten in what may prove the catalyst to the dismantling of the Big 12. The Nebraska Board of Regents has added discussion of "conference alignment and consider a resolution on the subject" to the agenda of Friday's previously scheduled meeting. The Chicago Tribune reported that the Big Ten would extend an invitation of membership to the school, and the Omaha World-Herald said the Cornhuskers would accept.

Nebraska's departure could prompt Texas, Oklahoma and other Big 12 South schools to accept an offer from the Pac-10, which is "locked and loaded" to act, according to the Los Angeles Times.

But one well-connected college administrator questioned why those schools wouldn't stand pat rather than accept the offer, which while potentially lucrative because of a bigger television
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contract for football could pose significant logistical challenges in the non-revenue/Olympic sports.

Oklahoma athletic director Joe Castiglione said Wednesday that his school has not met with the Pac-10, has no offer to go and continues "to work diligently to keep our conference strong."

Castiglione, formerly athletic director at Missouri, also questioned the logic of domino theories that college football is headed toward four 16-team super conferences.

"I'm still trying to get my mind around why that's better than what we already have," said Castiglione, who laughed and added, "I've never understood why people don't see that if super teams come together to make a super conference, they don't all stay super every year."

The Big 12 could hold steady with 11 schools and petition to maintain a championship game in football, or it could seek to add one or more schools.

But with Colorado's regents having met Tuesday to discuss legal issues pertaining to a potential move to the Pac-10, and Texas and Texas A&M holding a joint meeting to discuss their future today, the stability of the Big 12 figures to be a question for months to come.

And if the conference ultimately splinters and Mizzou has no Big Ten offer, Missouri would be left in limbo.

As unlikely as that scenario seems, there is no definitive way to see the Big 12's future or handicap MU's Big Ten candidacy.

In many ways, the school has a similar profile to Big Ten institutions, including being a member of the 63-school Association of American Universities. And MU's most high-profile sports, football and men's basketball, apparently would be competitive fits in the conference.

Lending further cause for optimism for MU fans, a source involved with past Big Ten expansion studies said he would "find it hard to believe the Big Ten would take Nebraska by itself."

Some believe the 11-team league would need to increase to 14 schools to add enough value to generate enough additional revenue to justify the extra mouths to feed. Delany told the Post-Dispatch on Sunday that the league could do its expansion in phases. So the reported invitation of Nebraska could just be the first step.

The Big Ten's overall revenue and philosophy of dividing it equally are appealing to Missouri, which received less than $10 million from the Big 12 last year in contrast to the $19.9 million Illinois got from the Big Ten.

The uneven revenue sharing in the Big 12, as well as perceived Big 12 slights in several of MU's football bowl assignments, are at the core of MU's displeasure with the Big 12.

That in turn has created rancor with MU in the Big 12, with several sources expressing anger at
Mizzou for letting it be known it was interested in the Big Ten — which some in the Big 12 don't believe is reciprocating.

"Now Missouri potentially has burned bridges in two places," said one conference source, though noting that there's no reason there can't be reconciliation.

Although Delany mentioned the possibility of expanding in "stages," the question becomes if not now, when for Missouri?

One way or another, it's all certain to be a topic for the curators, who would have to approve any conference change.
Hard to imagine a bad outcome for Mizzou

By Jeff Gordon
STLTONDAY.COM SPORTS COLUMNIST
06/09/2010

These are anxious times for University of Missouri boosters.

Will Mizzou end up joining an expanded Big Ten? Will the Big 12 somehow muscle up and compel the school to stay where it is?

Would Missouri have to scramble for a new affiliation if the Big Ten jilts the school and the Big 12 implodes, scattering its member colleges to the wind?

All the scenarios are still in play. The pressure is mounting on school and conference administrators. The Big 12 tried to speed things along by issuing ultimatums, but the Big Ten remains coy about its ultimate intentions.

If Nebraska takes the plunge and joins the Big Ten, that move could trigger a chain reaction that would dramatically alter the collegiate landscape.

On the other hand, the Big Ten could woo Notre Dame from its football independence and eschew further expansion — thus allowing the Big 12 to remain intact for the time being. If the Big Ten doesn’t raid the Big 12, the Pac-10 would likely keep its distance as well.

Predicting the outcome is impossible at this point. But the good news for Mizzou fans is this: Thanks to steady progress over the past 15 years or so, the University of Missouri athletic program is attractive to other conferences.

The school will deal from a position of strength, not weakness, should massive change occur. The program has come a long, long way, starting with the facility upgrades that athletic director Joe Castiglione oversaw before moving on to Oklahoma.

Since current athletic director Mike Alden arrived in 1998, the department budget has more than tripled. Fundraising yielded much greater returns and the teams generated more revenue.

Back in 2006, angry boosters nearly toppled Alden. Quin Snyder had made a mess of the basketball program and Alden didn't handle the situation well. Alden offered mea culpas all around for that chaos, but he barely survived the controversy.

Since then, new basketball coach Mike Anderson built a national power after a rough start. Gary Pinkel led MU to two Big 12 North football titles and annual bowl appearances. The
beleaguered Alden gained additional job security, earning a five-year contract extension (to 2017) last year.

Mizzou has become powerful in sports such as softball, baseball, soccer, volleyball and wrestling. Further facility upgrades and budget boosts allowed the department to become more competitive across the board.

“We think now that we should be a program that should be in the top three to four in the league,” Alden said last year. “Every sport, that’s what the goal should be.”

Progress has not come at the expense of academics. Tiger athletes delivered solid graduation rates, relative to peer schools. That matters to conferences like the Big Ten and Pac-10.

As a result, Missouri doesn’t have the same worries that Iowa State, Kansas State, Texas Tech and even Kansas have during these uncertain times. Mizzou doesn’t have the clout Texas possesses, but then few universities do.

The Mizzou athletic department offers the whole package to prospective conferences — high-profile football and basketball programs, quality in the non-revenue sports, solid academics and the support of two major metropolitan markets.

Given all that, it’s hard to imagine a bad outcome for Missouri as major college sports realign.
Dispute over Navy project still brewing

Researcher dropped from lead role declines to help.

By Janese Heavin

Wednesday, June 9, 2010

A federally funded project at the University of Missouri is moving forward on paper, but it’s unclear whether the university will be able to proceed with the actual research. That’s because Greg Engel, the researcher who helped secure the $2 million federal earmark, has said he won’t lend his expertise unless the university reinstates him as the project’s principal investigator.

Greg Engel

CAMPUS CHATTER BLOG

Engel gets support, but also hate mail, in fight for funds

Engel, an associate engineering professor, was listed as “Lead Principal Investigator” on a proposal he wrote to secure funding for his electromagnetic launcher research. Last month, engineering Dean Jim Thompson and Engel’s chairman, Noah Manring, replaced him as project lead, appointing Annie Sobel instead. Engel has dubbed it a “hostile takeover” of research he’s conducted at MU over the past 15 years.

The university counters that Engel was replaced as lead because he “was not fulfilling that role effectively,” MU spokeswoman Mary Jo Banken said. “He delayed satisfying Office of Naval
Research requests, creating administrative difficulties,” Banken said Sobel has been able to proceed with the paperwork needed to complete a contract with the Navy office.

Engel denies that allegation and sent the Tribune e-mail exchanges with the naval office showing that he had been working with them before being told he was no longer principal investigator.

The term “principal investigator” has been used throughout the process, but administrators now say the title is not correct. In an e-mail to Engel, Deputy Chancellor Mike Middleton wrote that “a principal investigator is officially designated on projects such as this only after a contract has been negotiated.”

Engel said it’s a ludicrous claim. No granting agency, he said, would give money without knowing exactly who would be doing the research. Engel said he’s the only faculty member on campus with the know-how to do the work outlined. Sobel was chosen as administrative lead, which comes with no extra compensation, because she has a graduate degree and military and project management experience, Banken said. She is also the wife of Rob Duncan, MU’s vice chancellor of research. Duncan was not involved in the decision to appoint her, but he has been copied on e-mails related to the project.

Provost Brian Foster acknowledged the appointment had an appearance of a conflict even though he does not suspect intentional wrongdoing. “Unfortunately, people just hadn’t thought about how it was going to look,” he said. “It was not a bad appointment, but it was still a bad choice because of the way it looked politically.”

Since his fight went public, Engel has had teaching assignments rearranged, having a popular online circuit theory course taken out of his hands and being assigned two courses in areas in which he said he does not have expertise. Last week, Thompson told Engel in an e-mail that he’d take another look at the teaching assignments if Engel scheduled an appointment to discuss work-related stressors and lent his expertise to the federal project. Engel turned the offer down.

Instead, he plans to file a formal grievance and is scheduled to talk to Sen. Kit Bond’s office this week. He thinks the university will be misappropriating federal funds if it attempts to use the earmark for something other than his electromagnetic launcher research.

Engel also has faced criticism from colleagues, some of whom signed a resolution supporting Manring. Thirteen of 20 regular electrical and computer engineering department faculty members agreed Manring acted fairly, with six not voting and one voting against.

The American Association of University Professors sent a letter yesterday to UM President Gary Forsee and Chancellor Brady Deaton in support of Engel.

“The message that is being sent to faculty and staff is loud and clear,” the letter said. “The way to succeed at MU is not by being a highly productive researcher and is not by expending hours creating quality education. If you simply do the right thing and work hard and effectively, then the fruits of your labor will be undermined or usurped by upper administration.”
Engel gets support, but also hate mail, in fight for funds

By Janese Heavin

Posted June 9, 2010 at 1:05 p.m.

Greg Engel is refusing to give up the fight to reclaim research funding he helped the University of Missouri secure late last year. Engel is the engineering professor whose work in electromagnetic launchers earned MU a $2 million federal earmark. Last month, his department dean replaced him as "principal investigator" appointing instead Annie Sobel, an adjunct professor and wife of a vice chancellor.

A follow-up story is in today's Tribune.

Yesterday, the American Association of University Professors sent a letter supporting Engel to UM System President Gary Forsee and Chancellor Brady Deaton. The letter reads:

From: The AAUP University of Missouri Chapter Executive Committee Re:: Open letter to President Forsee and Chancellor Deaton concerning Professor Engel

Dear President Forsee and Chancellor Deaton,

We are writing to express our very deep concern over the treatment of Professor Thomas Greg Engel of Electrical Engineering. We wish to express concern not only because an individual's rights are being violated, but also because we contend that his case is emblematic of why MU is failing to maintain its status as a first class university, and why it is currently falling in the national rankings.

Greg Engel has spent fifteen years developing a highly innovative electromagnetic launching device. This is in the forefront of modern technology, and represents a tremendous asset to the
USA as well as MU. As part of the earmark process he wrote a proposal, and as a result of his efforts won a two million dollar earmark from Congress to develop this technology. But Noah Manring, the Chair of Electrical Engineering, and James Thompson, the Dean of the College of Engineering, have sought to deny him the role of Principle Investigator on the project, in direct contravention to all well understood good practices and policies in such matters at academic institutions and government agencies.

Furthermore, when Professor Engel sought to oppose this decision, only a matter of weeks later, he was informed by his Department Chair that he was going to be removed from teaching Engineering 2100. Again, this course represents innovation on the part of Professor Engel. He has successfully added a large online component to this course. Not only is this consistent with the new teaching models that MU is seeking to achieve, but these projects are time consuming and hard. Professor Engel was so successful in his efforts that he has been nominated for a Provost Teaching Award. But now, not only is he being removed from teaching this course next semester, but also from teaching summer sessions. Engineering 2100 is a core course in the Engineering Curriculum, and it seems absurd that opportunities for students simply be taken away because a faculty has fallen out of favor with his Chair. Chair Manring’s stated reason was that Professor Engel sent a discourteous reply to another faculty member concerning this course – we believe that this is a total overreaction and does not represent the true reason.

The message that is being sent to faculty and staff is loud and clear. The way to succeed at MU is NOT by being a highly productive researcher, and is NOT by expending hours creating quality education. If you simply do the right thing, and work hard and effectively, then the fruits of your labors will be undermined or usurped by the upper administration. No, the way to success at MU is to play politics, and curry favor with flattering words to those above you. Furthermore, if you object and speak the truth, you will not be lauded for your honesty and integrity, but rather you will be punished for having the audacity to speak out and exercise your academic freedoms.

We know that Professor Engel's case is not unique at MU. The main difference between Professor Engel and others is not in the treatment he is receiving, but in his courage and integrity to speak out. Many faculty silently go on the job market and seek positions elsewhere. Many other faculty complain, but only to their immediate friends, and thus contribute to the low morale that pervades MU. Those that seek remedy through the grievance process established at MU find out, only after expending a tremendous amount of time and emotional energy, that the whole process was stacked against them from the beginning, and that the supposed remedies are simply illusory.

We know that MU professes to seek to be at the forefront of research and education. But all the “Strategic Plans” and “Mizzou Advantage” initiatives will fail if faculty believe that the fruits of their lifetime works will be usurped and that their efforts will bring upon themselves unwarranted punishment. The university will simply become an institution of “yes men” as all the best people are driven away to other institutions where they will be properly appreciated.

We have documentation to back up these statements, and we are happy to share these documents with interested parties.
Yours sincerely,

The AAUP-MU Executive Committee

Through respective spokeswoman, Deaton and Forsee declined to comment about the letter.

Not everyone's supporting Engel, though. In fact, 13 out of 20 regular faculty members in his department signed onto a resolution saying they support Engel's chair, Noah Manring, and believe he acted fairly in this case. Six faculty members did not vote and one voted against the resolution.

Engel also got a nasty note after he went public with his concerns. The note read: "Dear Greg, I am glad to see that you are finally getting the treatment you deserve you worthless piece of shit. Why can't you act like a normal person? Sincerely, A colleague."

Engel posted the note outside his office door but Manring asked him to remove it. In an e-mail, Manring wrote: "This message has been disturbing to faculty and staff, and we do not need to expose our students to this kind of thing. If the message is not removed by this afternoon, I will call the police to have it removed."

A couple of hours later, Engel got a message from MU police officer James Young saying the department had received complaints about the content of the letter. "Due to the use of profanity involved, and the nature of the letter and its effects on your co-workers, I am requesting that you remove the letter from your door and not re-post the letter in the future," Young wrote.

Engel complied.

It's not the first time administrators have indicated police action could be taken against Engel. Early last month, as Engel was learning he had been taken off the project as "principal investigator," he received a message from Manring telling him to stop talking to the Office of Naval Research about the project unless he had Sobel's permission.

"On behalf of the University of Missouri, and as your administrative superior, I am once again notifying you that this behavior is to stop," Manring wrote. "Cease and desist from corresponding with anyone at ONR on this program unless you have been given explicit approval from Annie Sobel. Failure to comply with this request will certainly have internal consequences, however, our legal counsel has advised us that this behavior may be construed as harassment which is a criminal charge. It is in your interest to comply."

Engel plans to file a grievance and is scheduled to talk to Sen. Kit Bond -- who helped get the earmark -- later this week.
Missouri governor to visit Thompson Center, sign health insurance legislation

By Megan Stroup
June 9, 2010 | 5:27 p.m. CDT

COLUMBIA — Gov. Jay Nixon plans to sign legislation regarding health insurance for autism patients at 3 p.m. Thursday at the Thompson Center for Autism and Neurodevelopmental Disorders, according to a governor's news release.

The new law would require Missouri insurance providers to cover the diagnosis and treatment of autism, including behavioral therapy, according to the release. Insurance policies would also be required to cover up to $40,000 of applied behavioral analysis — a therapy shown to be effective in children with autism and related disorders — until age 18.

Cheryl Unterschutz, spokeswoman for the Thompson Center, said families would also be at the event to speak about the benefits the new legislation could provide.

The Thompson Center is Nixon's third stop on Thursday. He will also visit St. John's Mercy Children's Hospital at 10 a.m. in St. Louis and the Burrell Autism Center at 12:45 p.m. in Springfield.
COLUMBIA MISSOURIAN

University of Missouri System names new research parks director

By Christie Megura
June 9, 2010 | 3:32 p.m. CDT

COLUMBIA — Five weeks ago Greg Williams got a phone call from a job search company. Today he is the new director of University of Missouri System research parks.

Williams is now responsible for developing the 10 university research parks and incubators across Missouri. He will be working closely with tenants to negotiate leases and nurture existing relationships.

The interview process moved fairly quickly, Williams said. He met with Mike Nichols, vice president of research and economic development; UM System President Gary Forsee; and about 12 to 15 members of the system and business volunteers.

"The value is not in the dirt, it's in the reputation," Williams said about the research parks. "It's in the system, the talents, the expertise and innovation."

Williams said the opportunity to work with the UM System on different campuses was appealing to him. The fact that he would be moving back to central Missouri near family was an added bonus.

"Next thing I knew, Mike Nichols was on the phone offering me the job," Williams said.

Williams was the senior vice president for economic development for the Springfield Area Chamber of Commerce. His involvement in multiple organizations such as the Missouri Department of Economic Development and the Missouri Chamber of Commerce and Industry has allowed him to develop relationships across Missouri.

Nichols said Williams' networking throughout the state helped him stand out as a worthy candidate.
"He's a deal maker. He makes deals. He gets things done," Nichols said.

Nichols said the research parks will help new businesses and create more jobs, but Williams emphasized that reaching out to new tenants is equally important to maintaining positive relationships with existing tenants. He also plans to focus on expansion and development opportunities.

"I'm ready to hit the ground running," he said.
People looking to lose weight should consider a doggy workout buddy. Participants in a fitness study who walked five days a week with dogs were faster and fitter than those paired with a human partner, according to a study by the Research Center for Human-Animal Interaction at the University of Missouri-Columbia.

Walking or running are not the only activities exercisers can enjoy with furry workout buddies, and specially designed sports equipment is available for dogs.

The Orbee-Tuff Soccer Ball from Planet Dog is a small soccer ball designed for canine use. The soccer ball has a five inch diameter making it significantly smaller than the 27 inch standard.

The ball is meant for interaction between humans and dogs for both games of fetch or back and forth dribbling. Both the shape and the material is meant to withstand intense chewing.

The ball is non-toxic and wipes clean after use. The ball can also be recycled if a dog loses love for the game. Indoor or outdoor use.

Made in the US, $16.45 at PlanetDog.com or 800-381-1516.
A coalition of organizations devoted to increasing minority participation in area businesses have come together for the first time to organize the Missouri Business Opportunity Summit June 16-17 at the University of Missouri–Columbia.

The University of Missouri System is hosting this historic event, sponsored by the St. Louis Minority Business Council, the MidAmerica Minority Supplier Development Council and the St. Louis Minority Business Enterprise Center.

“Why go to Columbia?” organizers ask in a news release, and answer: “Because you’ll get to meet MBEs and buyers you’ve never met before.”

The summit begins Wednesday June 16 with a Welcome Reception from 7:30-9 p.m. in Reynolds Alumni Center at University of Missouri–Columbia.

“If you want to do business with the State of Missouri and/or the University of Missouri System, then be sure to attend the Welcome Reception,” organizers urge. “Buyers will be there looking for the best MBEs in the state.”

The summit proper begins Thursday June 17 from 7:30–8:45 a.m. with continental breakfast, followed by exhibit setup.

Scheduled one-on-one meetings will take place 9:30–11:30 a.m., with scheduled seminars. The noon lunch will feature a welcome by Gary D. Forsee, University of Missouri president, and a keynote speech by Governor Jay Nixon.

The trade show opens at 1:30 p.m. with remarks by James Webb, president of the St. Louis Minority Business Council, and Lonnie Scott, president and CEO of MidAmerica Minority Supplier Development Council.

Scheduled one-on-one meetings resume at 2:30 p.m. and continue until 4:30 p.m. when the trade show also closes.
Various options for available for registration, transportation, lodgings and sponsorships. Register online at www.slmbc.org or www.mambdc.org. For more information, call the St. Louis Minority Business Council at 314-241-1143.