COLUMBIA MISSOURIAN

MU Women's and Children's Hospital set to open in September

By Alysha Love
July 7, 2010 | 8:29 p.m. CDT

Renovations at Columbia Regional Hospital are part of a plan to transform the building into the MU Women's and Children's Hospital.

COLUMBIA — The MU Children's Hospital is on target to move into space at Columbia Regional Hospital by Sept. 14.

The facility, which will be renamed the University of Missouri Women's and Children's Hospital, costs $12 million. When complete, it will occupy 58,600 square feet — or more than half — of the building.
Funding has come from a combination of bond financing, cash flow from hospital operations and part of the $25 million that the hospital raises each year through philanthropy, said Laura Gajda, executive director for advancement at MU Health Care.

Fundraising efforts included the Children’s Miracle Network Radiothon, private donations and money from supporters who bought naming rights to rooms in the new building.

The Children’s Hospital is currently on the sixth and seventh floors of University Hospital. In September, it will occupy space vacated by the orthopaedic surgery and general internal medicine units in Columbia Regional.

Construction is converting the first, second, fourth and fifth floors into a full women's and children's facility with adolescent and pediatric inpatient rooms, an intensive care unit, birthing center, operating rooms and a neonatal intensive care unit.

Most of the work, which began June 2009, has been completed, said Tim Fete, medical director of the Children’s Hospital.

Still unfinished are the pediatric intensive care unit, the pediatric short stay/blood disorder unit, the pediatric cardiology unit and the Children’s Hospital entrance.

Fifteen new faculty members have already been added to the hospital’s staff with plans to recruit 10 more, Fete said.

The move will mark the completion of Phase I of the hospital’s plan to create a child- and family-safe environment with increased services, access and recognition.

Safety was a main concern in planning the new space, Fete said. Private patient rooms for all children and adolescents create a safer environment, he said.

“There’s a lot of evidence that private rooms are safer and that you have a higher quality of care with less risk of medical error,” Fete said.

“We’re very proud of our internal infection rate, but there’s still an increased risk with more than one patient in a room, so we expect a further decrease from where it is now.”
The patient rooms are designed with the family’s comfort in mind, Gajda said. The rooms will be equipped with sleeper sofas for parents, as well as a toilet and shower in most rooms.

“We wanted to go to a private patient room model because it’s just more convenient, more comfortable and for infection control,” she said. “And kids have a lot of visitors; more visitors than anyone else.”

Fete said he also hopes that the new location will provide easier access to the hospital for both Columbia residents and patients from out of town.

“We’re a children’s hospital that attracts patients from nearly every county in Missouri,” said Matt Splett, media coordinator for MU Health Care. “This location, being at the intersection of I-70 and Highway 63, is going to be very beneficial. They basically exit off one of those major highways and they’re going to be right there.”

The Children’s Hospital’s move created the opportunity for several other medical facilities to relocate as well:

- MU Urgent Care Center plans to make the move to Keene Street, just south of the MU Women’s and Children’s Hospital. A pediatrician will be available in the evenings and on weekends.
- Thompson Center for Autism and Neurodevelopmental Disorders plans to relocate to 205 Portland St.
- Outpatient Rehabilitation Services plans to occupy a portion of the Thompson Center’s old building at 300 Portland St. It will provide pediatric physical rehabilitation services.
- The MU Pediatric Cardiology Unit is expected to open in Columbia Regional Hospital ahead of the rest of the Phase I renovations. Even though work remains, hospital staff are still planning for an opening in August.
- The University Physician’s East Eye Institute and ENT and Allergy Center will remain in their current locations near the hospital. Both facilities offer pediatric care.

By the end of Phase II, the only pediatric services to remain on the main campus are pediatric psychiatry and emergency stabilization in the trauma and burn units.
Phase II of the Children's Hospital's plan includes renovating the first floor of the South Pavilion into additional faculty offices and turning the ancillary services on the first floor of the Health Pavilion into a pediatric clinic.

Phase II is expected to cost an additional $12 million.
COLUMBIA MISSOURIAN

New associate dean appointed for MU School of Law

By Nicholas Jain
July 7, 2010 | 8:07 p.m. CDT

COLUMBIA — The MU School of Law named Professor Rafael Gely to be the new associate dean for academic affairs Wednesday morning.

The associate dean position opened after the death of James Devine on May 12. Devine, 62, died of a heart attack during a meeting of the Boone County Bar Association, according to a previous Missourian report. He was the associate dean of academic affairs at the law school at the time of his death.

Gely, 48, is entering his third year at the law school and has 20 years of teaching experience. Previously, he taught at the University of Cincinnati, the Chicago-Kent College of Law and Texas A&M University. He received his law degree and a doctorate from the University of Illinois.

As associate dean for academic affairs, Gely will be dealing with student academic issues, faculty issues and the curriculum at a sensitive time for the MU School of Law.

Students expressed concern in April when the MU Law School dropped from number 65 in the nation to number 93 in a U.S. News & World Report ranking of law schools. At a meeting held with law school faculty, several students demanded that the school employ higher-profile faculty, adjust the curriculum and take steps to improve career services.

Before his death, the previous dean, Devine, met with student groups to identify issues of concern. Gely said he plans to "continue that good work" in his tenure as associate dean.

"Every law school deals with issues, but with (the U.S. News rankings) it became very public," Gely said.
He said that the best way to improve the reputation of the MU Law School is to "keep putting good students out." As associate dean for academic affairs, he will not be in charge of career development.

Law School Dean Larry Dessem said in a news release that he was confident he made the right choice.

"Professor Gely is a wonderful classroom teacher, an exciting legal scholar and a terrific law school colleague," he said. "He will be similarly successful as associate dean for academic affairs, and we all look forward to working with him in his new position."

However, Jonathan Hutcheson, who graduated from MU Law School in May — and who was an outspoken critic following the rankings drop — thought the hire was a missed opportunity. He said the open position could have been an opportunity for MU to bring in a senior professor from a higher-ranked law school.

Gely will still teach, but with a lighter class load. Gely said that other professors or adjunct faculty could be brought in to teach his courses, which he said might be offered less frequently.

As for students who are deciding whether to go to law school, Gely says people should consider their goals and whether they want to practice law.

*Will Guldin contributed to this report.*
Officials lay out Hinkson concerns to feds

EPA has until Dec. 31 to set out new plan.

By JODIE JACKSON JR.

LEE'S SUMMIT — Columbia and Boone County officials yesterday got a chance to meet with federal environmental regulators to outline their concerns with a court-ordered draft to improve the quality of the Hinkson Creek.

The Environmental Protection Agency has until Dec. 31 to approve a total maximum daily load, or TMDL, plan aimed at removing Hinkson Creek from a federal list of streams in violation of the Clean Water Act. The Missouri Department of Natural Resources drafted the TMDL, which was required in 1998 by a federal lawsuit.

The TMDL calls for a 50 percent reduction in stormwater entering the creek, rather than identifying a specific pollutant to control or eliminate.

Local officials contend that a variety of steps have already been taken to achieve better water quality, but DNR has not collected new data on the creek's aquatic biology and hydrology since 2006.

Columbia Public Works Director John Glascock told EPA officials that implementing the TMDL could take "millions of dollars" without any proof that the expense would create a healthier stream.

Southern District Boone County Commissioner Karen Miller echoed Glascock's assessment.

"Boone County wants to do the right thing," she said. "We want to spend our money the right way."

The county, city and University of Missouri jointly hold a DNR permit that allows them to discharge stormwater into area streams.

Miller, who requested the meeting with EPA and DNR officials, said the entities are not "fighting tooth and nail" against the TMDL or the regulatory agencies but that they simply "want to know what we're fighting" with regard to stream pollution.

Miller also insisted that EPA consider the water-quality improvements made in the past several years.

Stormwater managers at the meeting presented a litany of improvements, from closing private sewer systems and lagoons to adoption of city and county stream buffer and stormwater ordinances.

"Give our efforts time to work," said Steve Hunt, Columbia's manager of environmental services.

Miller asked that EPA's review of the TMDL take into consideration the impact of agriculture and the salt the Missouri Department of Transportation applies to roads.

"It's very frustrating that agriculture doesn't play a part in this" TMDL plan "when they contribute to this," she said.
Local officials also said the likely cost of complying with the TMDL far outweighs the actual deficiency of the creek's supposed pollution.

David Shorr, a Columbia attorney who is vice chairman of the Boone County Regional Sewer District and also represents the Central Missouri Development Council, said the TMDL would have an "indirect, unintended consequence" of increasing urban sprawl by pushing development into other areas not covered by the proposed TMDL.

EPA officials said they would take yesterday's input to decision-makers for their review.

"We believe something needs to be done," said John DeLashmit, an EPA engineer. "It's been 12 years."

DNR had until last Dec. 31 to produce the TMDL.

"The fact that the state waited 11 years to get a draft out to the public is not our fault," Miller said, "yet we're being punished for it."
American farmers continued planting more genetically engineered crops this year, surprising some industry experts who expected farmers to back away from some biotech crops amid complaints of high seed prices and reports of growing weed resistance.

This spring the percentage of genetically engineered soy, corn and cotton rose, helping push total planting of all three crops up over last year and lifting soy to record-breaking levels and corn to near-record breaking levels.

According to a report issued last week by the U.S. Department of Agriculture, farmers cited good weather conditions in the spring planting season as the primary reason for the overall increases.

For some analysts, however, the biotech figures were unexpected. Since the first biotech crops were commercialized in 1996, planting of biotech soy, corn and cotton have climbed consistently. But last year acreage of biotech soybeans dropped by 1 percent, making 2009 the first year farmers appeared to be backing away from biotech soy varieties, a trend many agricultural analysts expected to continue.

"I think there were two reasons why," said Neil Harl, a professor of economics at Iowa State University. "One was the rapid run-up in cost (of seeds). The second was resistance by weeds to glyphosate."

More than 90 percent of the soybeans grown in the U.S. are genetically engineered to withstand applications of glyphosate, the active ingredient in Roundup, the country's top-selling herbicide. Creve Coeur-based seed giant Monsanto owns the technology in the majority of the country's soybeans and also manufactures Roundup. The two products work in tandem.

But in the past few years, the weeds that glyphosate kills have been cropping up in farm fields, particularly in the South. And the price of soybean seeds has risen sharply — more than 100 percent since 2001, according to federal figures. That has made some farmers turn away from biotech varieties or think about doing so, seed dealers and farmers say.

"Farmers have balked because they say it's just too high," said Grover Shannon, a professor of soybean genetics at the University of Missouri's Delta Center. "They're charging this big price and the product doesn't work as well."
Monsanto concedes that it may have been overly optimistic about Roundup's efficacy over the long term. Now the company is recommending residual herbicides, including a product for cotton and soybeans called Warrant that the company launched last week for the 2011 season.

The company also said it was giving farmers the option of buying a non-treated version of its new generation of soybean, called Roundup Ready 2 Yield. This could lower the cost and attract more farmers as they make their seed purchases this fall — something that could boost the biotech acreage even higher next year.

In the meantime, this year's rise in biotech acreage comes as welcome news for the world's largest seed company. The biotech giant became the subject late last year of a Department of Justice investigation into anti-competitive behavior. Late last month, the attorney general of West Virginia accused the company of claiming that Roundup Ready 2 Yield performs better than it actually does.

Monsanto has long countered by saying that its licensing practices, which allow hundreds of companies to sell seeds with Monsanto-developed traits, give more farmers access to its technologies. The company has also stood by its testing showing that its new soybeans yielded more than 7 percent over competitors'.

Still, researchers at public universities say they are continuing to work on developing conventional seed varieties to fulfill what they believe could be growing demand.
Soybeans, Corn Rise as Excessive Rain May Reduce U.S. Yields

July 07, 2010, 3:46 PM EDT

By Jeff Wilson

July 7 (Bloomberg) -- Soybean futures jumped the most in eight months and corn closed at the highest price since January on speculation that heavy rain will reduce yields in the U.S., the world's biggest grower and exporter of the crops.

In the Midwest, some fields got more than 10 inches (25 centimeters) of rain since June 7, or three times the normal amount, data from the Midwest Regional Climate Center show. The U.S. Department of Agriculture reduced its condition ratings for corn and soybeans for two straight weeks.

"The crops are now getting smaller," said Don Roose, the president of U.S. Commodities Inc. in West Des Moines, Iowa. "There has been too much rain."

Soybean futures for November delivery rose 32.5 cents, or 3.6 percent, to $9.325 a bushel on the Chicago Board of Trade, the biggest gain since Oct. 12. Earlier, the most-active contract reached $9.3575, the highest level since June 23.

Corn futures for December delivery rose 10 cents, or 2.6 percent, to $3.8925 a bushel, the highest settlement for the most-active contract since Jan. 12. The price gained 6.7 percent last week after the government said U.S. farmers planted less than they intended this year.

As of July 4, 71 percent of the corn crop was in good or excellent condition, down from 73 percent a week earlier, the USDA said yesterday. About 66 percent of soybeans got the best ratings, down from 75 percent three weeks ago.

Lower Yields

Based on yesterday's USDA ratings, average corn yields may fall to 161.6 bushels an acre, according to Seth Meyer, an agricultural economist at the University of Missouri in Columbia. That would trail a projected 162.3 bushels a week earlier and a record 164.7 bushels last year. In June, the USDA forecast 163.5 bushels.

U.S. soybean yields may drop to 42.4 bushels an acre this year from the week-earlier projection of 42.7 bushels, Meyer said. In June, the USDA forecast that yields would decrease to 42.9 bushels on average from last year's record 44 bushels.
"The excessive moisture in the Midwest seems to be reducing conditions and yields," Meyer said in a report.

Corn is the biggest U.S. crop, valued at $48.6 billion in 2009, followed by soybeans at $31.8 billion, government figures show.

--Editors: Patrick McKiernan, Michael Arndt
Renewable energy event set next week

Wednesday, July 7, 2010

The Advancing Renewables in the Midwest conference is scheduled for next week on the University of Missouri campus.

Speakers from the Department of Energy, Environmental Protection Agency, Missouri Department of Natural Resources and other agencies will present at the conference, which aims to cover the state of renewable energy. Funding, legislative updates, economic impact, new renewable projects and energy efficiency will be covered. The Columbia Water and Light Department is among the event’s host agencies.

The conference will be from 7:30 a.m. to 5 p.m. July 15.

The cost of the conference is $75 for the public and $100 for energy professionals. To register, go to advancingrenewables.org or call (573) 882-4349.
MU student raises awareness about North Korean refugees

By Raven Maragh
July 7, 2010 | 11:15 p.m. CDT

COLUMBIA — For many U.S. citizens, the mention of North Korea evokes thoughts of an erratic dictator or of a potential nuclear adversary.

But one MU student thinks the political issues have overshadowed a humanitarian crisis occurring within its borders.

Crystal Rosemann, a senior at MU, wants to start a local chapter of LiNK, a Torrance, Calif.-based nonprofit organization dedicated to supporting North Korean refugees and spreading the word about the needs of North Korean citizens.

Rosemann said she was first inspired to do something when LiNK volunteers came to show a documentary — called "Seoul Train" — at MU last fall. Since then, she has partnered with LiNK to try and start a chapter in Columbia. On Wednesday night, she helped LiNK volunteers by selling merchandise when they returned to show a different documentary at MU's Jesse Wrench Auditorium.

"Change only happens as long as you have the heart and passion," said Rosemann.

But in the face of other causes competing for the public's attention, Rosemann has faced an uphill climb. She hasn't been able to gather the set minimum of followers needed to start a LiNK chapter, and excluding volunteers from LiNK, about half a dozen attended Wednesday night's showing, with others filtering in and out of the auditorium.

For Justin Butts — a senior at MU who attended the showing and who traveled to South Korea last summer — the humanitarian issues in North Korea can make getting involved
seem overwhelming. But he said he's planning on traveling to South Korea again next February and hopes to continue helping the LiNK organization.

Others are also keeping up the fight to make the crisis relevant to Americans.

"This is not (solely) a Korean issue," said LiNK volunteer Esther Suh, who is traveling throughout the U.S. with three other interns from the organization. The documentary shown Wednesday night featured accounts of torture and suffering occurring in North Korea.

The documentary is one of three shown by the team to educate people about the refugees that flee North Korea — refugees that LiNK supports through shelters and resettlement programs, which Suh said are concealed for safety.

The organization's website said it has helped resettle more than 40 North Korean refugees to the U.S. and South Korea.

As for the national organization, Suh said, "we will not stop until we see liberty in North Korea."

Rosemann is optimistic that Columbia residents will get involved to learn more about the issues and how they can help.

"Once you know about the issue, it is hard to ignore," Rosemann said.