More on the Olson case

By Jane Silvey Posted July 22, 2010 at 11:52 a.m.

I've taken some heat from folks who feel my coverage of Loreen Olson's situation in the Department of Communications wasn't balanced.

I did want to address one concern I've heard from several people who claimed that faculty members "enthusiastically" supported Michael Porter, the chair Dean Michael O'Brien appointed after denying Olson's request for a stipend and summer pay.

Faculty members did say they would be OK with Porter's appointment for one year, a temporary chair while seeking an alternative solution.

Here is the letter:

May 14, 2010

Dean Michael J. O'Brien Arts and Science Dean's Office 317 Lowry Hall University of Missouri Columbia, MO 65211-6080

Dear Dean O'Brien:

In March, the voting faculty members in the Department of Communication unanimously supported Dr. Loreen Olson to be our next Chair. We met again yesterday, Thursday, May 13 and we still strongly support her for the position of chair.

We are disappointed that your dialogue with her has ended with her not being appointed chair. Loreen's leadership and service are very valuable and important to the future of our department. For the last month, I have been training her in preparation for her transition to be our next chair and she was already working on some of the issues affecting the next academic year. We believe she is the best prepared candidate to ensure the continued success of this department and its faculty. Therefore, as a faculty, we ask you to re-consider appointing Loreen to be our chair.

In recognition that our preferred choice may not happen, we offer as an alternative that you appoint Dr. Michael Porter to be interim chair for one year. This would allow a year of transition in which to consider various alternatives more completely. These alternatives might include
appointing one of the current faculty or doing a national search for a new chair. Appointing Michael as interim chair would allow consideration of these and other alternatives.

We are grateful for the support you have given us as individuals and as a collective group in the past, and we look forward to working with you through our new chair.

Thank you for considering our request.

Respectfully Submitted on Behalf of the Faculty, Michael W. Kramer Chair
Ad industry joins with MU school to create ethics programs

The Associated Press • July 23, 2010

COLUMBIA, Mo. (AP) — From gimlet-swilling adulterers on TV’s “Mad Men” to seven-figure fines for deceptive ads touting cold remedies and credit scores, the ad industry sure could use an image makeover of its own.

Industry leaders are teaming up with the nation’s oldest journalism school to launch the Institute for Advertising Ethics. Among the research center’s goals is to improve the public image of a business that spent $125 billion last year but isn’t exactly known for its bedrock principles and unwavering scruples.

Whether it’s the duplicitous exploits of fictional television character Don Draper or the latest penalties levied by the Federal Trade Commission, the ad industry struggles to put its best face forward. A 2007 Gallup survey ranked advertisers among the least trustworthy professionals — barely beating out lobbyists and car salesmen.

“But even though the industry’s fundamental purpose is to convince shoppers to buy a product they may not actually need, such persuasion can be done in an “ethical and tasteful” way, she added.

The research center’s leader is visiting professor Wally Snyder, a former FTC lawyer and American Advertising Federation president. While acknowledging the need to improve the industry’s reputation, he emphasized that the institute will also benefit the people who view ads.
St. Louis Post-Dispatch

Bond blocks bill to expand nuclear medicine tests

MU mention page 2

A legislative maneuver by Missouri Sen. Kit Bond is keeping debate about expanded U.S. production of a cancer-detecting nuclear isotope on hold.

The state's senior senator, a Republican, has blocked Senate debate on the American Medical Isotope Production Act. The bill aims to increase domestic production of the isotopes used in medical tests such as bone scans and cancer and heart disease screenings. The measure passed the House of Representatives by a vote of 400-17.

The Columbia Daily Tribune reports that Bond says the bill will decrease the global supply of medical isotopes by preventing the export of highly enriched uranium, a substance that is also a critical ingredient in nuclear weapons. No American nuclear reactors currently make the medical isotope known as moly-99.

A group of 19 physicians and scientists concerned with nuclear proliferation and the medical isotope shortage have asked Bond to drop his hold on the bill.

Five nuclear plants worldwide can produce the isotope, each outside the United States. Doctors and scientists warned of a shortage because of plant shutdowns and growing demand.

The bill would ban the export of highly enriched uranium starting seven years after the law took effect. Bond says that's too soon before U.S. research reactors could produce medical isotopes, meaning a reduction in the global supply. The ban is intended to persuade other nations to convert their plants to use low-enriched uranium, which cannot be used to make weapons.

"My primary concern is ensuring the millions of cancer patients get the cures they need," Bond said. "And this bill puts their treatment at risk."

Bond said the United States would need to convert three reactors by 2018 to satisfy domestic medical demand. Only one project is even close to meeting that time frame, he said.

The bill includes a provision to delay the ban on highly enriched uranium exports after seven years if a shortage of isotopes remains. And Congress could further delay the ban after 13 years.
Alan Kuperman, who coordinates the Nuclear Proliferation Prevention Program at the University of Texas, said Bond's concerns "bear no resemblance to reality."

"I can see no realistic prospect that this legislation would hurt the U.S. supply of medical isotopes," he said.

A Bond spokeswoman said Thursday that the senator's opposition does not prevent federal administrators from accepting grant applications _ and awarding money _ to domestic labs interested in medical isotope production.

The University of Missouri's nuclear research reactor was considered a top candidate to produce medical isotopes and announced a $40 million project less than two years ago to build a facility for that specific purpose.

But the university did not apply for federal grants made available this year through the Department of Energy's National Nuclear Security Administration that were designed specifically for isotope production. Two private companies received $11.25 million from the federal agency.

Kuperman said that Missouri was not able to raise enough money from private investors to move the project forward. He estimated it would cost at least $150 million.

Missouri officials familiar with the project could not be reached for comment, the Columbia newspaper reported.
Sen. Bond blocks debate on American Medical Isotope Production Act

Thursday, July 22, 2010 | 7:32 p.m. CDT
BY THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

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MU alumni aim to rename Maryland Avenue to reflect school spirit

A group of MU alumni has a goal to rename Maryland Avenue, in the heart of campus, to make it clear to travelers exactly when they enter Tiger territory.

"I think there has been a desire for several years to change the main street into campus to reflect the campus identity," MU spokesman Christian Basi said.

Basi said a group of past presidents of the Mizzou Alumni Association originally proposed the name change.

Alumni Association staff were unavailable for comment because of a staff retreat.

The change is dependent on approval from city officials, including the City Council, Basi said. He said MU officials hope to have the name changed by late September.

But he declined to provide the new name.

"We do want to keep a little bit of surprise," he said.

First Ward City Councilman Paul Sturtz said he was unaware of plans to change the name. The street, a north-south route between Stadium Boulevard and Conley Avenue, falls within his ward.

He said a name change initially didn't seem like a big deal.

"I'm not attached to the name now," Sturtz said.
Sixth Ward Councilwoman Barbara Hoppe said she also had not heard of plans to rename the street.

Hoppe said she would not rule out the name change, though she wants to approach it in a knowledgeable way.

"I'm always interested in what was the history of why it's named Maryland, so that we don't dump something that's significant and historic," she said.

Basi said some buildings along Maryland Avenue would be changing their addresses.

He said throughout the process, MU has been working with city officials and residents who live near Maryland Avenue.

"You need to make sure everyone is aware of what is happening," Basi said.
Curators’ secretary to replace Russell

Kathy Miller, secretary of the University of Missouri System Board of Curators, has been named interim chief of staff for the system.

She replaces David Russell, who on Thursday becomes interim commissioner of the Missouri Department of Higher Education.

Miller had expected to retire Sept. 30 to spend more time with family.

She plans to stay in her new role through January.

As chief of staff, Miller will be the system’s custodian of records, coordinating requests under provisions of Missouri’s Open Meetings and Records Law.

Curators have hired Cindy Harmon to replace Miller as board secretary. Harmon is a business operations manager at Missouri Employers Mutual in Columbia and previously worked in the MU Development Office.
Forum focuses on personal biases

*Burton hopes to set example.*

**By BRENNAN DAVID**

A panel that included Columbia Police Chief Ken Burton and local community leaders stressed the recognition of personal biases last night during a forum about racial profiling at the Activity & Recreation Center.

The panel was organized by the Missouri Association for Social Welfare to discuss racial profiling and preventive policing. Members of the panel were Burton; Mary Ratliff, president of the Missouri Chapter of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People; Rashed Nizam of the Central Missouri Islamic Center; Dan Viets, president of the Mid-Missouri American Civil Liberties Union; and Noor Azizan-Gardner of the University of Missouri Chancellor's Diversity Initiative.

Keynote speaker David Harris, law professor from the University of Pittsburgh, spoke on the subject of personal biases and how biases can result in police profiling, and Burton spoke about his department. The audience of about 50 people included members of the Columbia police command staff.

Burton said he has read some of Harris' writings about personal biases. "It's what I've been talking about since I arrived," he said.

Burton said that over the past two months he has spoken extensively on the subject of developing a way for officers to check their personal biases at the door of the department. His officers need to acknowledge they have personal bias implanted into their subconscious through years of media exposure and their upbringing, he said.

"We all have it," said Azizan-Gardner. "Training is critical, and it is critical to have a safe space to discuss it."

During an hourlong lecture, Harris walked the panel and audience through data that concluded New York City police officers practiced racial profiling in the 1990s. By showing racial profiling was taking place at the time when crime fighting was the objective, not racism, Harris showed that the tactic was ineffective.

The professor also noted the progression of profiling in America from blacks to Middle Eastern residents after Sept. 11, 2001, and now Hispanics.

"We are still doing the same thing with profiling. Just different people for different reasons," Harris said.
A Missouri statute that requires law enforcement departments to record 10 pieces of data for each stop also was placed under the microscope. Harris said the Attorney General’s annual racial profiling report is a benefit to Missouri residents because of the data it produces, but when calculated, can produce skewed results because it does not consider certain factors.

Burton said the department’s new crime analyst has been tasked with the job of collecting information on individual officers to determine if they need additional training or guidance concerning potential profiling.

“When police want to know how to do something, I want them to come to Columbia to learn how to do it,” Burton said of his new initiative.

Reach Brennan David at 573-815-1718 or e-mail bpdavid@columbiatribune.com.
Are Hyperlocals Replacing Traditional Newspapers?

By Gary Moskowitz Thursday, Jul. 22, 2010

All politics may be local, but apparently not enough journalism is. As newspapers keep cutting back on staff and printing skimpier editions, journalists, entrepreneurs and ordinary citizens have responded by creating websites to cover the local news they feel is going underreported — like the serious windstorm that hit Tracy Record's Seattle neighborhood in 2006. "Every day we break stories," says Record, the editor and primary reporter for West Seattle Blog, a site she and her husband created as an information hub after the storm. "In the past hour, I learned a major parks project is being delayed because of drainage trouble and just broke that on our site." She also covers car crashes, crime, council meetings, bake sales and walkathons for the 70,000 or so Seattle residents who live west of the Duwamish River. "If they were able to get the local news they needed elsewhere, we wouldn't have wound up doing this," says Record.

Hyperlocal has become a buzzword as familiar to news junkies as eat local is to foodies. The idea is to get residents involved in the reporting not just by sending in tips but by writing content about important local issues such as school boards and transportation. In professional newsrooms, "we spend too much time on craft and not enough time on community," says Michele McLellan, a fellow at the Reynolds Journalism Institute at the University of Missouri who spent the past year studying nearly 70 of the best hyperlocal sites. "Many of the new sites, even if they don't have the most polished reports, are flipping that: community first." (See the best netbooks and netbook accessories.)

McLellan, who will present her findings in September at the Block by Block: Community News Summit 2010 in Chicago, concluded that 1 in 10 hyperlocal sites is producing "good" content, some good enough to give traditional journalism a run for its money — sometimes literally. After years of relying on donation drives to keep going, Record's West Seattle Blog made six figures in revenue last year before taxes; the same is expected for 2010. (Comment on this story.)

Sensing the potential of niche news, the Knight Foundation, a nonprofit journalism organization, has given out roughly $20 million in grants since 2006 to help nurture the most promising sites. Last August, msnbc.com bought EveryBlock, which posts public records and news searchable by ZIP code in 16 cities. And in March, AOL announced plans to invest up to $50 million in local
initiatives like Patch, which provides community-specific news in 65 towns and expects to service hundreds more by the end of this year.

Megasites like EveryBlock are also pushing the boundaries of hyperlocal. EveryBlock runs individual community sites from its headquarters in Chicago and populates them mostly with publicly available data such as crime reports, building permits and restaurant inspections. "Many journalists would say good journalism is about good storytelling," says EveryBlock founder and former WashingtonPost.com editor Adrian Holovaty. "As much as I love a compelling story, I think good journalism can also be about organizing information in intelligent ways and giving people tools that let them help each other."

Databases vs. Shoe Leather

Most hyperlocal sites don't have the budget for flashy graphics or searchable databases. Their content comes from observant neighbors (and local gadflies) who care about both large and small goings-on around town. Hyperlocal sites also frequently publish upbeat accounts of parades and high school sports, as well as information on which local vendors sell the best produce. Recent headlines on Record's site noted a "mega-low" tide and an upcoming garden tour.

Some traditional news organizations, in addition to partnering with hyperlocal sites and helping train their contributors, are creating their own local outlets. In 2009 the New York Times launched the Local, a project that involved two news sites, serving northern New Jersey and parts of Brooklyn, which were produced by residents and student journalists with oversight from Times staff. (The paper handed off its Jersey coverage to another hyperlocal site at the end of June; the Brooklyn site is now run by the City University of New York in partnership with the Times.) Next up for the Times is a collaboration with New York University's Arthur L. Carter Journalism Institute to cover Manhattan's East Village. "Our goal is to support good journalism, be good partners to two of the leading journalism graduate schools in the country, and share information, ideas, resources and initiatives, with the goal of figuring out new relationships that will allow news organizations to extend their reach," says Mary Ann Giordano, the Times's deputy Metro editor, who oversees collaborative and hyper-local coverage. "The bonus is we also get to serve these two communities." (See 25 websites you can't live without.)

Record spent 30 years as a journalist, but it's her work on the West Seattle Blog — where she oversees (and pays) a handful of freelance contributors — that is earning her awards and teaching gigs. For two years, she has been teaching at the Poynter Institute, a nonprofit journalism training center in St. Petersburg, Fla. In May she was one of a dozen so-called digital entrepreneurs invited to participate in a News Entrepreneur Boot Camp at the University of Southern California's Annenberg School for Communication and Journalism, where she coached others on sustainable business models, revenue strategies and social-networking tactics.

But on a day-to-day basis, Record sits in her living room reinventing the role of an old-school newspaper editor. In June, when a "For sale" sign went up on a prominent, long-vacant building owned by the federal government, a devoted reader sent Record a quick e-mail with an attached photo. Record then went to work reporting the story. "Not Woodward-Bernstein stuff," she says. "But this apartment building is now long abandoned, overgrown, boarded up, graffiti-vandalized,
and thousands of people drive by it every week. They want to know what's happening with it. So this is a story, and we will continue to follow it.

*The original version of this story said MSNBC bought EveryBlock. EveryBlock was bought by msnbc.com, a separate company from MSNBC.*

Read more: [http://www.time.com/time/nation/article/0,8599,2005729-2,00.html#ixzz0uVkJSPO](http://www.time.com/time/nation/article/0,8599,2005729-2,00.html#ixzz0uVkJSPO)
Potential impact of health care measure unclear

JEFFERSON CITY • Missouri voters have a chance on Aug. 3 to weigh in on the hottest political topic of the year: the new federal health care law narrowly passed by Congress in March.

On paper, the vote seeks to change state law so that the federal government can't require an individual to buy health insurance. In reality, experts say the end result will be mostly symbolic, as the U.S. Constitution gives clear priority to federal laws over state laws.

But that doesn't mean that the vote isn't full of political meaning.

"I think it will be marketed as a referendum on President Obama," said George Connor, chairman of the political science department at Missouri State University.

Missouri will be the first of several states — Arizona, Florida and Oklahoma are the others — to hold what amounts to a voter litmus test on the president's health care plan, and that makes the vote an important part of the midterm election strategy of the Republicans pushing it.

"What people will hear if Proposition C passes is that the people of Missouri voted against President Obama's health care plan," said Patrick Tuohey, campaign manager for Missourians for Health Care Freedom, one of the groups supporting the ballot initiative. "Come Aug. 4, that's how it's going to be presented."

There is little doubt in Missouri political circles that Proposition C is going to pass.

The initiative has no organized opposition. The largest turnout among the two major parties on primary day is expected to be among Republicans, who have more hotly contested primaries, including the race for state auditor and a crowded field in the 7th Congressional District race.

Democrats, who opposed the measure in legislative debates earlier this year and persuaded Republicans to keep it off the November general election ballot, are largely steering clear of the
matter on the campaign stump. The Missouri Democratic Party did release a statement calling
the initiative "a meaningless and unconstitutional political ploy."

"Proposition C probably doesn't accomplish anything," said state Sen. Jolie Justus, D-Kansas
City.

If it passes, legal experts and observers agree, the proposition will likely be challenged
quickly, quite possibly by the federal government, said Richard Reuben, a law professor at
the University of Missouri School of Law.

The key issue for the courts, Reuben said, would be whether the state law was in direct
conflict with federal law.

Supporters of the measure in the Missouri Legislature said they expected a legal battle when they
passed the bill placing Proposition C on the ballot.

"It's setting up a constitutional showdown," said state Rep. Tim Jones, R-Eureka.

Indeed, much like the lawsuits filed by several states against the new federal health care law, the
ultimate goal is twofold: first, to find a case that makes it to the U.S. Supreme Court to further
define the relationship between states' rights and federal power; and second, to foment political
opposition to the health care law.

In Missouri, the narrative in favor of Proposition C fits hand in hand with the arguments made by
Lt. Gov. Peter Kinder in his lawsuit challenging some of the same aspects of the new federal law.

The proposition already survived one legal challenge just to make the ballot. A Jefferson City
lawyer argued that the measure was unconstitutional in that it included two issues. Besides the
health insurance mandate, voters will be asked to change a law regarding the liquidation of
insurance companies that go out of business. A judge ruled that both issues are related to
insurance, and therefore, the proposition is constitutional.

Proponents of the proposition argue that health care choices should be left to individuals.

But seeking that end through a statewide vote that contradicts federal law will ultimately not
work, many legal and political experts agree.

"Any attempt by a state to opt out will be in violation of the Supremacy Clause" of the
Constitution, said Connor, the political science professor.

Tuohey concedes the political repercussions of Proposition C are more significant than any legal
ones. But, he said, politics can be a powerful force that can lead to an effective repeal of the
federal law.
He points to the Real ID bill passed in 2005 by Congress that created some national standards for drivers licenses and other forms of state identification. There has been so much political opposition to the law that it has yet to be implemented, and Congress is considering changes.

Randy Barnett, professor of constitutional law at Georgetown University Law School, said the national debate over medical marijuana shows how state politics can affect federal policy.

Over the last decade, he said, several states have enacted laws allowing for the sales of medical marijuana, even though such sales contradict federal law. The Obama administration has reacted to the strength of the movement by deciding to allow the state laws to continue in force.

"It's a real-world example of how these state initiatives can change the politics and ultimately the enforcement," said Barnett, who took one of the landmark medical marijuana cases to the Supreme Court.

Some of the mandates in the federal health care law won't take effect for several years. So the political opposition is unlikely to die down anytime soon.

Conservatives hope to create a national groundswell of opposition to Obama's health care overhaul, and Missouri's vote — constitutional or not — is part of that strategy, Tuohey said.

"Ultimately," he said, "all of this is political."
Police look at officer diversity

By BRENNAN DAVID
Thursday, July 27, 2010

The demographics of Columbia's police force don't reflect the city's general population, but Chief Ken Burton said more internal decisions need to be made about how the department wants to serve the community before any new plan is made to address the issue.

After what has been a yearlong shift in departmental philosophy and structure, Columbia police are starting to evaluate officer diversity. Burton spoke to the Columbia Citizens Police Review Board last week about his department's struggles to "mirror" the community it serves in terms of its ethnicity and what the department should look like in years to come.

Before the department can figure that out, though, he said, it needs to complete its shift toward geographic policing and set more leadership positions. "As we get geographic policing in order, we will be better at telling you how many officers we are in need of," he said.

Also, to better determine how police should serve the community, data are being collected to figure out what cities Columbia can model. Burton said that is difficult because few cities Columbia's size have the higher education, downtown life, form of city government and industry Columbia has, he said.

As of June 9, the Columbia police force included 156 filled positions. Those broke down to 116 white male officers, 26 white female officers, nine black male officers, one black female officer and four male officers of other ethnicity. By unit, that includes 125 officers in patrol, 20 in the investigative and street crime units and the rest in narcotics, training and recruitment, professional standards and administration units.

Columbia's 2008 census demographics estimated 95,782 residents within city limits, which broke down to 80,526 whites, 12,136 blacks and the remaining residents identified as Asian, Hispanic or other. Residents could choose more than one race. There was a total male population of 47,139, with a 48,643 female population.

Those identifying as Asian comprise as much as 5 percent of Columbia's population, but Burton said it is difficult to find a single Asian officer.

"You hope that officer demographics match that of the community," Burton said. "We are nowhere close to that."
A Columbia police requirement of 60 hours of college courses is in place to mirror the makeup of the community. Training and recruitment Sgt. John Worden said that requirement benefits the community, but it also shrinks the selection pool. His office makes recruiting trips to historically black colleges across the South, and minority officers help recruit as well.

Blacks make up 12.7 percent of Columbia's population, and the police department is 6 percent black. **S. David Mitchell, a University of Missouri associate professor of law** who has conducted research in law, race and ethnicity as well as criminal justice administration, said some blacks are reluctant to apply for jobs in law enforcement because of a frustration with the "institution" of government.

"Some view law enforcement not to protect and to serve, but to arrest and convict. They have to get over that," he said. "That happens by increasing the connections between all races and police, by police officers spending more time in their communities. But also for others to recognize the difficulty that their job entails."

*Reach Brennan David at 573-815-1718 or e-mail bpdavid@columbiatribune.com.*