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## MU Health cited for its infection control practices

### Complaint led to November visit.

By Jodie Jackson Jr.

The surgery department at University Hospital is not in compliance with infection control standards, a finding that could lead to University of Missouri Health Care no longer qualifying for Medicare reimbursement for its services.

In a Dec. 29 letter to a former MU Health employee who complained about the surgery department's infection control practices, the acting manager of the Kansas City regional office for the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services, CMMS, said the complaint led to an investigation by the Missouri Department of Health and Senior Services.

"The investigation found that the facility was not in compliance with regulations relating to infection control practices in multiple areas of the hospital and maintenance of the physical environment throughout the hospital," read the letter signed by Mary Woltje of the CMMS regional office's division of survey, certification and enforcement.

Last month, MU Health spokeswoman Jo Ann Wait said inspectors were at the hospital in early November, and "they did cite some concerns relative to broad areas such as housekeeping." She said the concerns were "relative to cracks, discolored tiles and areas in both patient and non-patient" spaces "where we needed to get in and do some sprucing up."

Yesterday, MU Health spokesman Matt Splett said the hospital has been "addressing the issues CMS identified and are expecting a site visit from CMS surveyors early this year."

In her letter, Woltje said state investigators will conduct an unannounced "revisit" to the hospital "to assure it comes into compliance with federal regulations."

The complaint that led to the November inspection was filed Oct. 20 by former employee Sam Backues, who was a certified sterile processing technician at university-owned Columbia Regional Hospital in 2006 and 2007 and at University Hospital in 2007 and 2008. He said his complaint to CMMS included infection control standards at Regional Hospital.

"I was told to find a different job," Backues said, recalling how his supervisors reacted in early 2008 when he told them his concerns about deficiencies in the sterile processing department. Among other things, Backues said the department was reprocessing single-use devices that were not intended for multiple sterilization procedures.

Backues transferred to another, non-health care job in the university system before quitting in late 2008.

Backues said the letter he received from CMMS validated his complaints. Woltje's letter said the hospital was not in compliance with the federal Conditions of Participation for Physical Environment and Infection Control.

"A hospital must be in compliance with all Conditions of Participation to receive federal money to care for Medicare-eligible individuals," the letter said.

The letter concluded: "Should the facility not come into compliance with all Conditions of Participation within a reasonable period of time, we will publish a notice in the local newspaper and, then, no longer pay for any Medicare-eligible individual who receives services at the hospital."

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## Research team produces biological joints

By Janese Silvey

University of Missouri researchers are continuing to find ways to create biological joints they hope will one day replace the need for artificial metal joints.

James Cook, a researcher in the University of Missouri College of Veterinary Medicine and Department of Orthopaedic Surgery, participated on a team that created new cartilage in rabbits using a biological scaffold in the animals' joints. The study, published this fall in *The Lancet*, was led by Jeremy Mao of Columbia University in New York.

The surgery works by implanting scaffold structures into animals with the same technique now used in human shoulder replacements — by replacing the entire humeral head, the ball area that connects to the socket in shoulder joints. In this study, researchers inserted the scaffolds into rabbits, then infused the structures with a growth factor that encouraged the animals' own cells to become cartilage and bones.

Rabbits infused with the scaffolds were able to put weight on their limbs and use them faster and more consistently than rabbits treated without the scaffolds. After four months, researchers found that cartilage had formed in the scaffolds, creating a cartilage surface for the humeral head. The rabbits did not show any signs of complications or negative side effects.

"The device was designed with both biological and mechanical factors in mind," Cook said in a statement. "It is unique in design and composition and in how it stimulates the body's own cells. This is the first time we have seen cartilage regeneration using this type of scaffold."

Unlike previous biological joint research, this technique eliminated the need to harvest and implant stem cells, which requires multiple surgeries.

Cook also was involved in research at MU that used lab-grown cartilage in the past to mold new knees and hips for dogs, working alongside Sonny Bal, associate professor of orthopedic surgery in the MU School of Medicine.

"We are continuing our concerted efforts in this arena," Cook said. "Our goal at Mizzou's Comparative Orthopaedic Laboratory is to do away with metal and plastic joints, and instead, regenerate a fully functional biologic joint for everyone who needs one. We think this is the future of orthopedics, and we hope that future is starting here and now."

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## Bowl mania: What recession?

By Henry J. Waters III

If the nation is struggling to claw out of the worst recession since the Great One in the 1930s, you can't tell it by observing the sports scene, in particular the college football bowl phenomenon.

Making an accurate count challenges the mathematical skills of mere newspaper editorial writers, but having put forth my best effort, I come up with 26 "post-season" games, including the BCS Championship wrestle on Jan. 10.

An even greater task would be toting up the money generated and spent on these events. Fans are urged — cajoled, threatened — to travel to their teams' bowl games, often far across the country at costs ranging into the thousands per head. The amount spent for TV rights surely rivals many government budget deficits.

I suppose it's a good sign that such a large part of our citizenry is so able financially and athletic departments are doing so well. I won't join the sizeable cohort of churls ready to criticize this evidence of skewed priorities. The millions and billions flowing into college and professional sports coffers and salaries for coaches and players generate from a system of free association in which sports fans turn pockets inside out for games even as they can't find the wherewithal for more seemingly essential spending.

Who is anyone to say the system takes advantage of its customers? All the customers need do to break the cycle is push back. As one big-time athletic director told me a year or so ago, the crazy escalation of coaches' salaries and other signs of unremitting inflation will end when "the fans tell us." No such message seems on the way from university campuses where 100,000-seat football stadiums sell out for years on end and the key to athletic affluence is Top 10 success, naturally requiring more millions spent on coaches and facilities.

I hope this is not another hubble akin to that recently afflicting the housing market. What sort of underlying social strength supports sports enterprises to rival that of people's homes? Why would sports ticket sales outlast the mortgage?

The answer seems to be the strange nature of personal priority-setting. Even during recessions, stressed individuals will continue to keep spending on liquor and entertainment while roads and schools deteriorate. Gamblers will risk the back 40 to keep on betting.

Maybe we have come to expect government to provide roads and schools as societal entitlements without figuring we personally need not spend much to support them while we dig deep into our personal fortunes for entertainment.

We will watch games on television, making audiences that sports marketers can translate into fancy revenue. As any casual observer knows, the hundreds of hours of sports available every week are beyond individual consumption. They're only there because slavish audience fragments add up to a horde making a market.

This epistle is nothing to take too seriously, merely ruminations on a phenomenon that continues to intrigue without any sort of "answer." The fans, including almost all of us, will tell us.

Meanwhile, West Elbow versus Siwash is on at 12:30 a.m.

# COLUMBIA MISSOURIAN

## Council to hold hearing on Hinkson Creek plan

### MU Mention on Pg. 2

By [Nick Schnelle](#)

January 1, 2011 | 5:59 p.m. CST

Resolution opposing EPA strategies on the agenda

COLUMBIA — A resolution that would officially state the city's opposition to EPA recommendations for eliminating pollution in Hinkson Creek will be the subject of a unique public hearing before the City Council on Monday night.

The debate, which will be the first item of business on the agenda for the council's 7 p.m. meeting, follows criticism about the lack of involvement by the council in establishing city policy on the EPA plan.

First Ward Councilman Paul Sturtz two weeks ago criticized Mayor Bob McDavid and city staff for failing to involve the council in establishing policy on the creek before writing a letter to the EPA opposing its plan. He said in public comments that the matter was only the latest example of the staff and mayor acting as if the council were an "impediment" to expeditious policy making.

"As far as I can tell there has never been a vote or resolution in regard to the city's position on Hinkson Creek," Sturtz said Friday.

Ken Midkiff, chairman of the [Osage Group of the Sierra Club](#), who supports the EPA's recommendations, also has criticized the city's stance and what he sees as its failure to involve and inform the council.

The resolution will be debated as a "special item" on the council agenda.

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City Manager Bill Watkius said in a memo to the council that he was surprised at Sturtz's comments and that he believes the council has been kept up to speed on the Hinkson Creek situation.

Watkins said the city's response to a recent Sunshine request from Midkiff, and extensive reporting by the media on the ongoing dispute involving Hinkson Creek, "indicates extensive communication."

"If there was a lack of understanding of the issue, there certainly were many opportunities to clear up concerns," Watkins said.

The debate over Hinkson Creek is of high concern due to the major implications the EPA's recommendations could have. **The city, county and MU all oppose the EPA plan and, represented by attorney David Shorr, have been pushing for an alternative.**

Hinkson Creek is listed on the Missouri Department of Natural Resources' list of impaired streams. After several attempts by that department to develop a plan for cleaning up the creek, the EPA took responsibility. It has proposed a plan known as a total maximum daily load, which seeks to bring pollution in the creek down to acceptable standards.

The EPA's most recent recommendation calls for Columbia to reduce the amount of stormwater that runs into Hinkson Creek by 39.6 percent, according to a previous Missourian article.

Shorr, of the law firm Lathrop and Gage, said in a 23-page letter to the EPA that the plan is problematic in several respects.

A major concern lies with the EPA's reason for listing the creek as "impaired." Shorr argues the EPA illegally uses stormwater runoff as surrogate for pollutants that are "unknown." He also argues that there are flaws in the EPA's evidence and that "a volume reduction of that magnitude is scientifically impossible."

Shorr also argues that the plan could actually result in higher concentrations of pollutants in the creek, infringe on the property rights of downstream landowners and undermine ongoing efforts by the city and county to control pollution. Shorr said the cost of implementing the plan could reach as high as \$300 million, based on the cost of a similar plan created for Vermont's Potash Brook, a much smaller watershed.

On Monday night, Watkins said in his memo the city staff will give a 15-minute presentation on the situation. McDavid has promised Midkiff 10 minutes to address the council.

Midkiff said he plans to discuss the plan, the validity of using stormwater runoff as a surrogate for known sources of pollution and the legitimacy of Shorr's contract with the city.

The EPA originally was under a Dec. 31 deadline to review public comments and make a final recommendation. After negotiations with the Sierra Club, however, that deadline was extended to Jan. 31.

# COLUMBIA MISSOURIAN

## **KOMU, Mediacom extend deal through weekend**

By Eve Edelheit

December 31, 2010 | 2:36 p.m. CST

**COLUMBIA – Negotiations between KOMU/Channel 8 and cable provider Mediacom will continue through Monday, according to a news release from Mediacom.**

Their current agreement was supposed to end at midnight Friday unless a new deal could be reached over how much KOMU, the NBC affiliate for mid-Missouri, is paid in compensation for programming.

Programming will not change this weekend. If negotiations fail, Mediacom will drop KOMU programming but will still have some NBC shows available in its on-demand service.



## Rolling with the changes

Missouri Athletic Director Mike Alden spent the first six months of 2010 saying as little as he could about the possibility of MU joining the Big Ten Conference. The big move never came to pass, but it was still a newsy year for the Missouri athletic department.

The football and men's basketball teams ended the calendar year ranked in the top 15 in the nation. Women's basketball Coach Cindy Stein and swimming Coach Brian Hoffer resigned under pressure and were replaced by Robin Pingeton and Greg Rhodenbaugh, respectively. And longtime track Coach Rick McGuire retired, although he remains with the athletic department running the new sports psychology program.

Alden recapped the year Thursday in an interview with Tribune sports editor Joe Walljasper.

**Q:** Last year at this time, conference realignment was just getting started. After six months of that, what lessons did you learn and what would you have done differently?

**A:** In reflection, I'm not sure there's a lot we could have done, as I've thought about it, differently, because there were so many things that were absolutely out of our control. That's one of the biggest lessons I learned, or any of us learned, during that whole deal. As much as we like to think we are in control of things, we have learned that we're not in control of those types of issues.

When that announcement from the Big Ten came out and the immediacy of Missouri being speculated as being a possible target of the Big Ten, for whatever reason, you lost almost complete control of that. There was no way to be able to control those types of messaging points that went out there, even though you may have thought you could.

**Q:** In a situation like that, where nothing was publicly happening but every day there was more talk about it, is it better to say nothing at all or shoot down every false rumor?

**A:** One thing, and I have said this a number of times before, we could have done — and this is particularly for Tiger Nation, for all of our fans and our supporters and people we deal with, whether it's media, faculty, staff and everyone — was to be able to come out early and say, "Hold on, here, OK. We don't know anything about these issues. We don't have any control over these types of things."

Before things started to swirl, we needed to temper the thought processes and discussions that were going on with our fans, and we didn't do that. We chose not to say anything, and that is something that could have helped. Would it have? I don't know.

Q: Was there ever a point where you thought the Big Ten was going to give you an invite?

A: No. I didn't have a feel for any of that one way or the other. Our feel for that was consistent with what you would read in a newspaper or Sports Illustrated or whatever that was. Our focus always was, "Well, we think we're doing a pretty good job at Mizzou, and we don't have any idea if they're going to call or not."

Q: Can you say how often Missouri officials met with the Big Ten to discuss the possibility?

A: No, I can't. I think that whole process was one that being operated from Chicago, Illinois, from the Big Ten Conference. For us to be able to talk about what they were doing in Chicago and what Jim Delany and his team were trying to do, I have no idea.

Q: I meant, can you say whether you actually met with the Big Ten to discuss the possibility of joining?

A: No, I can't say those things.

Q: After things came to a head in June, people from other schools, whether it was (Nebraska Chancellor Harvey) Perlman or (Oklahoma State booster) T. Boone Pickens, were taking some shots at Missouri, saying that if not responsible for this whole thing, you should have been more grateful to be in the Big 12. What was your response to that? Did you feel that criticism was fair or unfair?

A: I thought it was silly. I said that publicly. I thought it was silly. For any institution in our league or any other league to say there was one institution that was at fault for something, that's just silly. That's not true.

Q: While this was going on, some people were speculating that we might see four 16-team super conferences. As you look in the crystal ball, what do you think the future of realignment is?

A: I think if we say it's done then folks don't have an idea of what the future will hold. That would not be appropriate for us to say it's done. I think it is. I think it's going to stay the way it is right now, but you just never know. I never thought the Big Ten was going to expand a year ago, either. But right now there's a time that things have settled and calmed. I think conferences are trying to line up their television packages to continue to grow their footprint and their revenues nationally. I think over the course of the next couple of years, that will be what people are focusing on. Now, does that mean that conference realignment is over with? I have no idea. It may not be.

Q: When the Big 12 decided to stay together there was some talk about what the value of its new TV contract might be?

A: I think it's consistent with what was talked about before, that it's significantly greater than what it is right now. I think it's a value that would be more on par with an SEC type package, maybe a Big Ten package, but that's a different animal there with the Big Ten Network itself. I

think the marketplace has improved, which is really important, over the last six to nine months. I do think the market, though, is still a little bit cautious, as it should be, because of what we went through economically over the course of the last two years. But the value of our league is certainly up there with the top two or three leagues in the country. And my belief is, as the Big 12 takes itself to the marketplace, those values are going to show out.

Q: But what do you think the per-school revenue will be?

A: Like I said, the SEC and the Big Ten. I think those leagues are paying, it depends how you measure it. Over the course of a 20-year period, the average payout per institution is probably between \$15-17 million per year over the course of 20 years. That's a progressive scale, so it starts at a certain level and goes up.

Q: Will the new TV contract with Fox (which is the Big 12's secondary contract) be finalized in the spring?

A: I wouldn't say they'll be finalized. With our TV partners out there, they know there's an opportunity for them with the Big 12. That's something Dan Beebe and his team are really driving right now. We're hoping that's something we could see in the next six to eight months.

Q: Is there any hope of the Big 12 having its own network, or has the fact that Texas is planning its own network put the kibosh of the idea of a Big 12 Network?

A: Everything's out there on the table right now. There's every opportunity from starting networks to being completely network-driven opportunities or something in between. That being said, I think the combination of network-cable partnerships, with what we've seen from ESPN and ABC and those different entities that are out there, that's probably where you have the strongest opportunities, versus a stand-alone network. But that's just an opinion from my standpoint. There are a lot of people out there who think there are a lot of options for the Big 12.

Q: Why do you think a stand-alone network works so well for the Big Ten but wouldn't work for the Big 12?

A: It could. But I think, though, the thing about the Big Ten is they got in early, they got all 11 schools at that time to commit all of their rights at the same time. They were able to put everything together, they took it to the marketplace with a tremendous amount of risk, because they were looking ABC and ESPN straight in the eye and saying, "If you're not going to provide us with what we want, we're going to do this on our own." People didn't take them seriously, and they went out and did it and then went through an unbelievable amount of pain for three or four years. I think the lessons learned on a league like that doing that are ones that probably, as you go down the road, is going to be tough for other leagues to replicate.

Q: As far as the Big 12 goes, the bylaws didn't change regarding the things you were frustrated with. Are you still frustrated with the revenue-sharing plan or have you moved on?

A: We've moved on. We made our point. We have a certain philosophy and believe in it. Our philosophy hasn't changed, but we're part of a league. We agree to that, and we move forward with that.

Q: With a 10-team Big 12, specifically in football, how will that change your nonconference scheduling? Looking past the time when the current contracts are over, will you no longer have a BCS team on your nonconference schedule?

A: I don't know about that, Joe. I understand the fact that people look at the league now with nine regular-season games being BCS games, what are you going to do with the nonconference games. Philosophically, I think we'll still look at a BCS nonconference team, just like we are with Arizona State (in 2011 and 2012). But whether we continue to maintain that, I'm not sure, because we're going into a league structure that is different than what we had in the past. But at least right now, for the foreseeable future, we'll continue to have at least one BCS nonconference game in football.

In basketball, that's a double round-robin. It gets you to 18 games a year on the men's and women's side. We really like a couple of BCS nonconference games at home, a couple on the road and then the Illinois game — that's five — or thereabouts, schools of that caliber, because in basketball it's a little more open.

Q: Now that you're not playing Illinois in football, beyond the upcoming series against Arizona State and Indiana, what do you look for in a potential BCS conference opponent? Is it geography or what are the criteria?

A: Normally, I would say that the No. 1 aspect would be from a geographical standpoint, a footprint. Sometimes people would look at an Arizona State and say that really didn't match up with what you were saying geographically. But we thought from a destination standpoint — and we've learned that now from the Insight — it's a good place to travel to and travel from. But normally it would be a geographic footprint. Secondly, you would want to look at who are the schools you are recruiting against, and can you play them? We liked that with Illinois, because we recruit against them and respect them and have a high interaction with that institution, like we might with an Indiana or other schools in our footprint. The third part certainly is the attractiveness for television and the attractiveness for your fan base.

Q: In recent years you were frustrated with where Missouri ended up in the bowl selection process. Did you think the Big 12 went to bat for you this year, in terms of getting the Insight Bowl ahead of Nebraska?

A: I don't know if the Big 12 did completely. I think they did. But I say that knowing that Dan and his team, they try to be balanced across all of us and don't want to try to ever push one school over another school. So I don't believe they would have done something like that. But I do believe our league stood up and said, "Hey, Mizzou fans do travel well. Mizzou does have a solid program and a great institution." But I don't think they would have pushed that for one institution over another.

The way it all worked out, though, the Insight Bowl was a terrific destination for our team. It was a terrific bowl game for us. I think what the Fiesta Bowl and Insight Bowl people do is outstanding. And, the thing we're most excited about --- we certainly wanted to win the game, no doubt --- was the way our fans traveled. It was outstanding. I tell you, when the Fiesta and Insight people were giving the kind of compliments they were to the Missouri fans and the record attendance, hopefully, once and for all, we've taken this thing aside that people have this image that our fans don't travel that well, because they did a terrific job.

Q: I guess you sold 7,200 tickets through Missouri. Did that equal or exceed what you were hoping to get?

A: Yeah, our goal had been 7,000 sold through us. But that's the thing people don't tie into, and I understand that, too. We had a ton of fans there that bought their tickets through other outlets, either directly from the Insight Bowl people or through ticket-exchange companies that are there, particularly on the West Coast.

Q: In the offseason are you hoping to get a contract extension done for Gary Pinkel?

A: I don't know. I would tell you we're always looking to do things to improve our football program. Coach. I believe he has five years left on his deal we did a couple of years ago. But certainly that's something that's always fluid with us. It's something we're always looking at. There isn't anything that's definite at this time, as we're talking right now. But I will tell you that's something we're always looking to do, with Gary in particular, because he's done such a great job.

Q: He's extended five years out. At what point do you usually think you need to get an extension done?

A: I always look at below three years. When it's three or below, that's when you have to take a look at it, because it impacts recruiting, it impacts future scheduling. Again, I come all the way back here, though: Gary has done an unbelievable job here for the 10 years. Does he have five years left on his contract? Yes. But is he somebody we want to make sure will be around here for a long time? Absolutely.

Q: Mike Anderson, the last two years other schools have come after him. What do you think Missouri has to do to make sure he's your coach long-term?

A: I just think Missouri needs to keep doing what they're doing. I believe that. Together as a team, our institution, our athletic program, Mike, our staff and everybody, we just need to keep doing the things we're doing. Part of that, though, is not only recognizing and being appreciative of the great job Mike and his staff and our team is doing in men's basketball, but also providing the resources around that program so we can keep excelling and be able to put us in a position to compete for a national championship, because that's all of our goals.

Part of that is making sure we're doing a good job moving tickets, doing a good job promoting our product. But we've got to make sure from a turnstile standpoint that our folks continue to

come and to show up at the games. We've done a much better job over those five years. Our attendance continues to grow. But you're looking at a top-10 program in the country, a top-15 program, and you've got to make sure the marketing continues to improve.

Q: You made some coaching changes this year. With women's basketball, what do you think is a realistic expectation of how long Robin Pingeton needs to get into the top half of the Big 12?

A: It's the toughest league in the country, I think. If you take a look at the Big 12 and the number of teams we have in the Top 25, holy cow. And then others getting votes. I think 10 of the 12 schools are either in the Top 25 or getting votes. Robin coming in, certainly she has a lot of work to do from a recruiting-base standpoint, from a philosophy to have her style of play into our league. I think it's going to take a couple years to do that.

I think the success we've already seen so far this year is great. However, pretty soon we're going to start hitting the gantlet, and I think all of us need to recognize that we need to be a little bit patient as she continues to build that. I think it's going to take her a couple years, but she's a winner. She's won every place she's been. She's a great person. She's surrounding herself with a culture and an environment to be successful. But I think it's going to take a couple years, just like it did with Mike, it did with Gary, it did with Ehren (Earleywine), it did with Tim Jamieson, Wayne and Susan Kreklow.

Q: Obviously, you have a good swimming facility. What about that program? What's the potential there?

A: I think the potential there is pretty high. I don't want to put too much pressure on Greg Rhodenbaugh and his entire team, but he's recruited a great staff and he inherited a couple, too, with Jamic Sweeney and Pat Rowau. He has a good group of people. He has one of the best institutions in the country to recruit to. He's going to tell you that. I know that. We know that. Academically, Mizzou has a great image, and he has one of the best facilities in the country.

So you've got a staff with international experience, international reputation. You've got a great institution to recruit to and you have one of the best facilities in the country. I think that combination is a combination for success. He's done it a high level. He's won at a high level. And I think we're going to see that at Mizzou in a couple years, as well.

Q: You had the situation where Rick McGuire retired as coach but has started a sports psychology program. What do you think the payoff of that might be for all your athletes?

A: I think Rick's impact in our program has been isolated more towards men's and women's track and field because that's the field he operated in daily. However, his influence impacted a number of our programs. Now that he's able to focus his entire attention on those services that he's providing, I think it's going to have a tremendous impact on all our programs. Our kids believe in it, and they've seen the results. Our coaches do, too.

I think what Rick is building is going to be a model program nationally. He's recruited Ph.D. candidates that work with our student-athletes — a team of eight — in addition to Brad

Ekwerekwu, who is a part of that team, and Bryan Maggard and Joe Scoggin and all these people who are involved. I think that impact is going to be felt throughout all 20 of our programs, but I also think it's setting us up to be a model program for others to try to replicate around the country. I think that's important for our institution.

Q: In June there was talk about Mizzou starting its own network. What do you envision that being, and how close to reality is that?

A: The opportunities to deliver content is the real focus. This is my opinion. We have to focus on how are we delivering content. For a 52-year-old guy like me, I remember it being delivered on a television set. That's true today, however, it's also being consumed in other forms, on hand-held devices and tablets and your computer. Now, as we go forward, how are we delivering that content? Is it being delivered the same way it was 10 years ago? No, it's being delivered differently. So the opportunities for Mizzou to deliver content digitally, in my opinion, is the way we really have to focus on in the future so people can consume it through connected television, through your computer, through hand-held devices and through tablets.

To do that, I don't think you would see that set up as a traditional quote-unquote network where somebody turns on Channel X, Y, Z and there is Mizzou every hour of the day, every day of the week, every week of the year. What I do see is how can I get my Mizzou fix all the time through my hand-held device, through computer or connected TV or through my tablet, which is iPads. That's what we're going to try to do at Mizzou. When does that happen, how does that happen? All of that is part of this whole equation on networks and television contracts with the Big 12 and on and on.

This article was published on page B6 of the Sunday, January 2, 2011 edition

# THE TIMES OF INDIA

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## Shrinking brains are making humans dumber

LONDON: Whether we admit it or not, the human race seems to be heading for a dumber version of itself -- thanks to the shrinking size of our brains.

The human brain has been gradually getting smaller in size over the last 20,000 years, says a new report. It includes both the genders worldwide.

This decrease follows two million years of growth of the human cranium.

"Over the past 20,000 years, the average volume of the human male brain has decreased from 1,500 cubic centimetres to 1,350 cubic centimetres, losing a chunk the size of a tennis ball," according to a Daily Mail report quoting Kathleen McAuliffe in Discover magazine.

"The female brain has shrunk by about the same proportion."

McAuliffe reported the comments made by John Hawks, anthropologist from the University of Wisconsin, who argues that the fact the size of the human brain is decreasing doesn't necessarily mean our intelligence is in decline as well.

Some paleontologists agree with this diagnosis that our brains may have become smaller in size, but increasingly efficient.

But others believe that man has indeed become steadily more stupid as he has evolved. Several theories have been advanced to explain the mystery of the shrinking brain.

According to a theory, the big heads were necessary to survive Upper Palaeolithic life, which involved cold, outdoor activities. The second theory is that the skulls developed to cope with a chewy diet of rabbits, reindeer, foxes and horses.

As our food has become easier to eat, so our heads have stopped growing, according to the supporters of the theory.

**A recent study conducted by David Geary and Drew Bailey, cognitive scientists at the University of Missouri explored how cranial size changed as humans adapted to an increasingly complex social environment between 1.9 million and 10,000 years ago.**

They found that when the population density was low, such as during the majority of our evolution, the cranium increased in size. But when a certain area's population changed from sparse to dense, our cranium size decreased.

They concluded that as increasingly complex societies emerged, the brain grew smaller because people didn't have to be as smart to stay alive.

# ST. LOUIS POST-DISPATCH

**MU MENTION PG. 3**

## Colleges find area freshmen unready

BY ELISA CROUCH [ecrouch@post-dispatch.com](mailto:ecrouch@post-dispatch.com) / Sunday, January 2, 2011

More than 40 percent of area public high school graduates in 2009 entered Missouri colleges and universities so far behind in reading and math that they took at least one remedial course once they arrived on campus, data show.

Of the 7,067 area graduates who enrolled that year as freshmen in state-funded schools, 3,029 of them landed in academic purgatory, taking catch-up classes that didn't count toward a college degree, according to the Missouri Department of Higher Education.

The proportion of Missouri public school students who end up in remedial college classes has risen only slightly in recent years but is up sharply since 1996. Thirty-eight percent needed remediation before moving on to college-level courses in 2009, compared with 26 percent 14 years ago.

"It is concerning," said Rusty Monbollon, senior associate in academic affairs for the Missouri Department of Higher Education. "It's not a problem that has one easy answer."

President Barack Obama has set a national goal of having the world's highest proportion of college graduates by 2020.

But with college remediation on the rise in some states, such as Missouri, it could be a difficult goal to attain. Studies suggest that the farther behind students are when they enter college, the longer it takes to earn a degree or certificate, if they do at all.

Nationally, about 1.3 million students are taking remedial courses at public two-year and four-year institutions at a cost of at least \$2.3 billion, according to a 2008 report by Strong American Schools, a nonprofit financed in part by the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation.

Illinois does not track the percentage of its high school graduates in remedial courses, but other data suggest the state also struggles with college readiness.

### DIFFERENT STANDARDS

In Missouri, state and college officials partly blame the increased demand for college remediation on high schools, where graduation standards don't always line up with what students must know to succeed in college. They also say the proportion reflects the fact that enrollments are up at two-year colleges — schools that typically accept all students no matter what their skill level.

"If we just said, 'No, you're not college ready, so come back when you are,' we're turning our backs on a huge number of students and a large pool of talent," Monbollon said.

Officials in higher education are working with the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education to define college readiness and a more uniform standard of what high school graduates must know to tackle college-level work.

"High expectations is a critical piece," said Margie Vandeven, assistant commissioner for the office of quality schools at the Missouri Department of Elementary and Secondary Education. "We need to expect that all of our students can be college and career ready."

Some recent high school graduates say they were surprised at how unprepared they were when they arrived on college campuses.

Demond Cox, a 2006 graduate of University City High School, struggled his sophomore year at Missouri University of Science and Technology, where he majors in mechanical engineering. He didn't need remedial help, but received tutoring. Cox took honors and Advanced Placement classes in high school.

Nevertheless, "I wasn't used to studying," he said.

Other graduates who'd taken college-prep classes and landed on the high school honor roll can spend several semesters catching up.

"You do get students who, through whatever system or school they've had, and for whatever reason, are unprepared," said Sandra Brady, assistant professor in reading at St. Louis Community College at Meramec. Some of these students are 'surprised, shocked, angry," she said. "They think, 'I have a high school diploma. What are you telling me?'"

Typically, colleges place students in remedial classes based on their scores on college admissions tests or on national college entrance exams, such as the ACT.

The ACT tests skills in four areas: mathematics, reading, English and science. In Missouri, just 26 percent of students in 2010 met or exceeded benchmarks in all four areas. In Illinois, the proportion was 23 percent. Students who meet the ACT benchmarks have a 75 percent chance of earning a C or better in those college courses.

## **VARIED READINESS**

In the St. Louis area, the level of college readiness varies widely among public high schools, ranging from 4 percent of graduates needing to play catchup, to 92 percent.

On one end of that spectrum is Metro High in the Central West End, a selective magnet school where students must earn C's or above to remain enrolled. Just 4 percent of graduates — or one of the 25 who attended state schools — took a remedial college class.

In contrast, nearly every college-bound graduate of Vashon High School in north St. Louis ended up in remedial college classes. Ninety-two percent of them took at least one.

Both Metro and Vashon high schools are in the St. Louis School District.

Graduates from suburban public high schools also had varying levels of college readiness.

Those who graduated from Timberland High School in the Wentzville School District were among the best prepared, with 6 percent in remedial courses. Those from high schools in the Parkway, Rockwood and Clayton school districts ranked toward the top, according to state data.

Graduates of affluent public schools aren't necessarily college ready. At Ladue Horton Watkins High School, 21 of the 76 graduates in 2009 who went to state-funded schools needed extra help once they arrived. The number of graduates needing remedial help has the school district's attention. Most of

Ladue's 299 graduates that year went on to some of the most prestigious colleges and universities in the nation, where remedial classes aren't offered.

Even so, "Ladue has to pay attention to those numbers," said Keu Fox, a college and career advisor at Ladue High. "We're not serving all our students if we don't."

The least prepared graduates came from the region's most struggling high schools — Vashon, Roosevelt, Soldan, and most other high schools in the St. Louis Public School District.

Barbara Harris graduated in 2010 from Roosevelt High School, where she took some college prep classes and occasionally landed on the honor roll, she said. But Harris rarely had homework.

This fall, Harris tested into remedial reading and the lowest level of remedial math at St. Louis Community College at Florissant Valley, where she's pursuing general studies. She eventually hopes to get into a nursing program. But first, Harris must complete two more semesters of remedial math before she can even enroll in college algebra.

"I could be taking something else," Harris said. "If high school had prepared me for college-level algebra, I wouldn't have to spend so many hours catching up."

## **SCHOOL STRATEGIES**

St. Louis Superintendent Kelvin Adams said the district was working on strategies to make students more college ready, such as improving math and reading skills in all grades, and refreshing their skills before test time.

"We want to give kids the best opportunity," Adams said. "We don't want all of their dollars spent on remedial courses."

In Missouri, state education leaders say they are working to close the knowledge gap. Last year, the state Board of Education adopted a set of common core standards — a list of things students must learn to graduate — to meet that end.

In some school districts, high schools are working on personal study plans to address each senior's weaknesses, Vandeven said. "We're getting a lot of inquiries into how to best serve high school students and make that senior year more meaningful," she said.

For the time being, the demand for remedial courses is steady.

**At the University of Missouri-Columbia**, about 700 students were enrolled this fall in 23 offerings of Math 0110 — a precursor to college algebra. The school spends more than \$70,000 teaching the course.

The demand is much higher at the St. Louis Community College system, which offered 46 different remedial courses this past semester, primarily in math, reading and English.

More than 17,000 students enrolled in 922 different sections of those remedial courses, though the actual number of students was smaller than that, because many took more than one class.

"It's not a good thing," said Brady, the reading instructor at St. Louis Community College at Meramec. "But honestly, this is the reality with which we are faced. Our job is to take them from where they are and help them move forward."

*Tim Barker of the Post-Dispatch contributed to this report.*