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Forsee departs University of Missouri at crucial time

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By MARÁ ROSE WILLIAMS

The resignation Friday of University of Missouri President Gary Forsee to help care for his ailing wife was the least expected of the bad tidings coming this month for the four-campus system.

Although the cancer diagnosis of the former Sprint executive's wife had been known since early December, Forsee's decision, effective immediately, came as a surprise to many.

Without Forsee, weathering the events of January — college officials say they expect state funds to be cut 10 to 15 percent this year -- will be even more difficult.

Gov. Jay Nixon's budget proposals will be released in the next few weeks. The university system had enjoyed a two-year respite from deep spending cuts, but the state's severe budget forecast means hard times ahead for a system with a \$2.5 billion annual budget and more than 70,000 students.

Forsee's business and entrepreneurial approach, however, left the system better positioned to deal with what's coming, some said.

Systemwide faculty leader Gary Ebersole praised Forsee for being the right man for the university "for this period of intense financial pressure. He knows how to talk to the governor and the legislature and the community."

He said Forsee was good at explaining to those in Jefferson City how university-spurred economic development should be considered a very important "fourth story" — along with the more traditional chapters of education, research and community outreach.

In a statement Friday, the 60-year-old Forsee said the illness of his wife, Sherry, was discovered in an emergency appendectomy in late November. Subsequent successful surgeries have been performed, with no further signs of the disease found.

But, he said, "the University President's role is a statewide '24X7' commitment to support the teaching, research, service and economic development mission of our four campuses.

“After a long working career, LOTS of moves and working regularly from multiple locations, it is clearly time for us to get Sherry’s next six months of treatment completed and to focus on our family and great friends.”

Steve Owens, general counsel who had temporarily taken over university operations, was named interim president. Phillip J. Hoskins, currently university counsel, was appointed interim general counsel.

Owens said he was not interested in assuming the position permanently. The university will begin a search for Forsee’s replacement immediately.

Warren Erdman, chairman of the University of Missouri Board of Curators, said a presidential search committee, including all curators and the board’s student representative, Laura Confer, will meet this month in Columbia.

Erdman learned of Forsee’s decision Monday at a private meeting between the two.

“I certainly was saddened, and I am still sad,” he said. “I think that Gary has been a tremendous president.”

At the Kansas City campus, Chancellor Leo Morton recalled how the former telecommunications chief “crisscrossed this state, visiting with parents, students, legislators and everyday citizens. He has listened patiently and responded to many of their ideas about how the University system can utilize its strengths in teaching, research, service and economic development — continue to help improve Missouri.

“Gary helped us clarify our mission and direct our efforts more efficiently and effectively.”

David Russell, the state commissioner of higher education, said Forsee’s “efforts to link economic development and university-driven research will have a positive impact on the state’s economy for years to come.”

Along the way mistakes were made, too, Ebersole said: “Forsee was a former CEO that sometimes slipped back into being a CEO.”

A big faux pas, Ebersole said, was Forsee’s executive decision to require faculty for the first time in university history to pay 1 to 2 percent of their salary toward retirement.

“He did that without consulting faculty,” Ebersole said. “Faculty was furious. Many still are not happy.”

When hired in late 2007 as the system’s 22nd president, Forsee acknowledged having a lot to learn about running a university.

He had been forced out as chief executive officer of Sprint Nextel Corp., where he'd earned an estimated \$17 million. He left Sprint with a \$54 million severance package and accepted the \$400,000 annual salary with \$100,000 deferred bonus offered by the university.

Under Forsee's leadership, the university system saw accomplishments, including:

- Reinvigorating the system's research and economic development program, including a \$5 million Enterprise Investment Program to support business collaboration with university researchers.
- Implementing accountability measures to support more transparent operations and performance.
- Establishing private-public partnerships, such as the Mizzou-Cerner Tiger Institute for Health Innovation, focused on innovation and creation of new university revenue streams.
- Holding two statewide summits on energy and the life sciences, which brought collaboration on new enterprises by businesses, investors, elected officials and the academic community.
- Investing in the university's eLearning infrastructure, allowing greater access to courses and programs on all four campuses via a single Web portal.

From Nixon's office came appreciation for Forsee's "steady hand at the tiller throughout his tenure" that saw a period of record enrollment growth.

In his statement, Forsee referred to his tenure "during what has certainly proven to be a challenging time."

He had enjoyed a fortunate bargain struck with the governor to keep the budget ax mostly away from the halls of academia in return for keeping tuition steady for two years while rates around the country were soaring.

Tuition will go up, although Nixon is expected to try to limit the increases in pursuit of his goal to increase the number of graduates from Missouri schools.

Forsee will be missed in the coming struggles, officials said.

"This is a setback, to have lost the energy that Gary brought," Erdman said. "But I have every confidence in this leadership team's ability to move us forward."

The Star's editorial | University of Missouri system fared well under Forsee

Fri, Jan. 07, 2011 08:00 PM

Gary Forsee's path to the presidency of the University of Missouri system ran through the corporate world, not academia. But he turned out to be the right person at the right time.

That's not to say the last three years have been an ideal time for anyone to lead Missouri's four-campus system. The schools were in retrenchment mode when Forsee arrived, and the economic collapse only made matters worse.

But Forsee, who announced Friday that he was resigning to help his wife, Sherry, recover from cancer, put his business background to good use.

University leaders said they had documented \$115 million worth of efficiencies during Forsee's tenure. He also sought to expand the university system's reach in non-traditional ways.

He helped arrange a partnership between the University of Missouri and Cerner aimed at devising ways to cut health care costs and improve patient care in Missouri. The university system has seen leaps in patents, licensing income and the development of research parks under Forsee's watch.

University faculty initially worried about a systems leader without an academic background. But apart from some friction over benefits issues, Forsee's arrival ushered in a period of relative calm on the campuses.

His choice of retired businessman Leo Morton to fill the chancellor's job at the University of Missouri-Kansas City was a good one. Morton also came to academia through a non-traditional gate.

Forsee's low-key manner and corporate credentials helped quiet the Missouri legislature's Republican majority, which had been critical of state-funded higher education in recent years. Forsee also enjoyed a good relationship with Gov. Jay Nixon, who protected higher education funding in the first two years of his term.

Forsee has been an eloquent spokesman for college preparedness, academic competitiveness and the value of an educated citizenry. Missouri and the university system have fared well under his steady leadership.

ST. LOUIS POST-DISPATCH

University of Missouri president resigns

Tim Barker | Posted: Friday, January 7, 2011 12:15 pm

The Board of Curators for the University of Missouri announced today that President Gary Forsee is leaving.

In December, Forsee told the board that he was taking a leave of absence to be with his wife, who is battling cancer. But now Forsee, who has been at the helm of the system for three years, has decided to make the move permanent.

Steve Owens, the system's general counsel, is interim president. A national search is expected to begin in January.

The resignation is effective today and does not include a severance or any ongoing compensation.

Gov. Jay Nixon applauded Forsee's steady leadership. "I greatly appreciate the leadership Gary Forsee has demonstrated over the past three years, as he has capably led Missouri's university system through a period of record enrollment growth."

Forsee took over the University of Missouri's four-campus system in February 2008.

He is a former CEO and president of Sprint Nextel and a Missouri native.

He replaced Elson Floyd, who left as university system president in 2007 to become president of Washington State University.

Forsee, of Kansas City, took a significant pay cut from his former position at Sprint, where he earned an estimated \$17 million. He was forced to resign as CEO and president in 2007, with a severance package of \$54 million.

As university president, Forsee initially earned an annual salary of \$400,000, along with a deferred bonus of \$100,000 a year if he stays for three years.

When he took the position, some members expressed concern about Forsee's lack of an academic background.

In a statement released today, Forsee thanked the university community for its support.

"When I came to the University three years ago, I recall saying I had a lot to learn and was, in fact, going to need to 'go back to school,'" he said.

"I thought coming in that I knew a fair amount about the University. Of course, once on the inside and 'going to school' on our mission, I was quickly impressed with the breadth and quality of the work of our great faculty and staff, the incredible talent of our students, and the support and passion of alumni and friends of the University."

UM President Gary Forsee resigns

By Janese Silygy

Just a month shy of his three-year anniversary, Gary Forsee said today he is stepping down from his role as president of the University of Missouri System.



Photo by Don Shrubshell

Sherry and Gary Forsee attend an event announcing Gary Forsee's selection as president of the University of Missouri in December 2007 at the Reynolds Alumni Center. On Friday, Gary Forsee announced he is resigning from his post.

Forsee has been on leave from the university since early last month after his wife, Sherry, was diagnosed with cancer. She had successful surgery, he said, and is now expected to start regular treatment.

Steve Owens — the system's general counsel who has been overseeing day-to-day operations in Forsee's absence — was appointed interim president. He said this morning he is not interested in being a candidate for the full-time job.

Also today, the Board of Curators formed a search committee that will meet during the regularly scheduled curators meeting later this month in Columbia, Chairman Warren Erdman said.

Forsee was tapped as the 22nd president of the University of Missouri System after he was ousted as CEO of Sprint Nextel Corp. With a severance package that ensures him more than \$80,000 a month, Forsee clearly did not need the \$400,000-per-year university job, Owens said.

“Gary did not need to take the job three years ago, but he took it for the right reason,” Owens said. “And he tackled it with a vengeance.”

Forsee’s business background spooked some faculty members initially, but others said that experience helped guide the university through tough economic times.

Owens — repeating what some faculty members have said — called Forsee the “right person at the right time.”

“The businessman became a teacher and taught us all something about leadership and decision-making,” he said.

Erdman praised Forsee for a string of accomplishments, including negotiating a deal with Gov. Jay Nixon to hold tuition flat in exchange for limited cuts in state funding.

“I greatly appreciate the leadership Gary Forsee has demonstrated over the past three years, as he has capably led Missouri’s university system through a period of record enrollment growth,” Nixon said in a statement.

Forsee leaves behind several unfinished initiatives that Owens vowed to continue through the transition period.

Last year, Forsee unveiled an accountability system aimed to show lawmakers and the public where the four campuses are succeeding in their teaching, research, service and economic development missions. A completed version of that chart originally was supposed to go to curators in December, but that was pushed back to this month’s meeting in Columbia.

Forsee also created task forces to study preschool through higher education and work force needs. He put an emphasis on economic development as well as online learning — both of which remain board commitments, Erdman said.

The task of determining how much tuition will be increased next year also falls to Owens. The board is expected to hold a special meeting next week to start that discussion.

Finding a new university president will fall to a board that likely will consist of mostly new curators. Three curators saw their terms expire at the end of the year, although they’ll continue to serve until replaced. Columbia Curator Bo Fraser resigned, leaving the Ninth District curator spot vacant.

Erdman said he has confidence Nixon will appoint new curators in a timely manner.

Erdman, a businessman from Kansas City, said he is not going into the search process with a pre-conceived notion of what traits a new president should possess. When asked whether he will focus on business or academic candidates, Erdman said he wants to find the "best person."

"I don't want to go into the process with a set notion, but rather let the process take you to a decision," he said.

Erdman declined to speculate how transparent the search process will be but said he prefers that candidates be confidential.

"You can't attract the best candidates unless you're committed to confidentiality," he said.

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COLUMBIA MISSOURIAN

Gary Forsee steps down as UM president

By MISSOURIAN STAFF

January 7, 2011 | 12:56 p.m. CST

Gary Forsee is stepping down as president of the University of Missouri System, effective immediately, he told the Board of Curators Friday.

Forsee said he and his wife, Sherry, need time to focus on her recovery from cancer. Sherry Forsee was diagnosed with cancer after an emergency appendectomy in late November. He had been on extended temporary leave since Dec. 2.

Board of Curators President Warren Erdman said the board will begin a search immediately for the 23rd system president but would not set a deadline for completing the search.

In addition, he said the curators have appointed Steve Owens, general counsel, as interim president.

The curators met in a 90-minute closed meeting to discuss the matter. In a statement after the meeting, Owens said he would not be a candidate for the permanent position.

Forsee told the curators that his wife is recovering well from recent surgery and will begin a treatment regimen to ensure she remains cancer-free.

In a letter e-mailed to UM faculty, staff and students, Forsee said: "After a long working career, LOTS of moves and working regularly from multiple locations, it is clearly time for us to get Sherry's next six months of treatment completed and to focus on our family and great friends."

Forsee, 60, was named president in December 2007 and assumed the position in mid-February 2008.

A graduate of the University of Missouri-Rolla, now called Missouri University of Science and Technology, he came to the system after serving as chairman and chief executive officer of Sprint Nextel Corp. and as vice chairman of BellSouth Corp., where he was responsible for domestic operations and chaired the Cingular Wireless venture.

In a post-announcement press release, Erdman cited a list of accomplishments under Forsee, who became president as the UM System confronted an economic crisis that also gripped the world.

Among those accomplishments were:

- Consistently strong operating performance during the most challenging economic climate because of strategic financial decisions and stringent cost controls that resulted in improved credit ratings.
- Agreement with Gov. Jay Nixon, the General Assembly and the campuses to hold tuition flat for two years. That tuition freeze will end this year as the university faces more severe budget limitations.
- Creation of the new University of Missouri Health Care enterprise.
- New private-public partnerships, such as the Mizzou-Cerner Tiger Institute for Health Innovation, that are focused on innovation and creation of new university revenue streams.
- Achievement of \$115 million in documented cost savings through campus and system efficiency and effectiveness measures.

Much of his work in the past 18 months has been concentrated on maintaining steady financial health in a challenging economy.

In November 2009, Forsee ordered a hiring freeze across the system. He also asked for reduced spending in nonsalary areas, imposed a wage freeze and secured the curators' approval to institute emergency furloughs if necessary in the summer.

Those furloughs were never imposed, but the wage and hiring freezes have continued on some level. University employees were also asked to contribute to their retirement funds, and the curators have been working through a revised benefits plan that would be more advantageous to the system.

Forsee's resignation letter alluded to the demands of the job:

"The University President's role is a statewide, '24X7' commitment to support the teaching, research, service and economic development mission of our four campuses. This is a role both Sherry and I have taken on, and with passion. We have enjoyed the opportunity to serve our State and help in any way we could during what has certainly proven to be a challenging time."

In prepared statements, both Gov. Nixon and Sen. Kurt Schaefer acknowledged his contributions.

"I greatly appreciate the leadership Gary Forsee has demonstrated over the past three years, as he has capably led Missouri's university system through a period of record enrollment growth. President Forsee has provided a steady hand at the tiller throughout his tenure," Nixon said in his statement.

According to Schaefer, "During his time as UM System president, Gary raised the credibility level of the University of Missouri at the State Capitol, and he leaves the system in better shape than when he came in."



UM prepares for president search

Past in education could be a goal.

Sudarshan Loyalka would like to see someone with a background in higher education appointed to be the next University of Missouri System president.

That said, he's not entirely opposed to considering candidates with business or other backgrounds.

"I would definitely prefer" an academic, said Loyalka, chairman of faculty affairs on MU's Faculty Council. "But whoever emerges as the best candidate, I want to really see that the person has a very good understanding of academic institutes at this time, and if he does not have it, he must be a quick learner."

The hunt for a new UM System president will start later this month; Gary Forsee announced his resignation yesterday. The search committee, composed of the UM System's nine-member Board of Curators, will meet as part of the board's regularly scheduled meeting Jan. 27-28 in Columbia.

Board Chairman Warren Erdman said yesterday that the committee likely will hire a consultant to conduct a nationwide search.

MU Faculty Council Chairwoman Leona Rubin said she's not sure whether she'd prefer a new president with experience in education or one with a business background, as Forsee had.

"I think what this told us," she said, referring to Forsee's hiring and tenure, "is that we shouldn't pigeonhole the person we look for. We need to look for the right person. We want somebody smart, and Gary Forsee was very smart. It's important to find a person with the right attitude about how they approach the job and life, and I think he had that, too."

Eddie Adelstein, an associate professor in MU's Department of Pathology and Anatomical Sciences, said he'd like the university to recruit someone with greater experience in academic growth and development.

"I would hope to try to find someone like Elson Floyd with a deep understanding of education," he said, referring to Forsee's predecessor. "Someone committed to making this university accessible to all the potential students, someone who would not see this as a large corporation but as an institution committed to providing education for all deserving students."

UM System General Counsel Steve Owens is interim president. He said he has no interest in the permanent job but will try to aid a seamless transition.

Rubin said she's not worried about the interim. Owens, she said, has a "great staff of vice presidents."

"I think the staff there is perfectly capable of keeping this going and hopefully being involved in hiring somebody with the qualities that Gary Forsee had," she said.

Forsee's salary at the university was \$400,000, including a \$100,000 annual bonus that he turned down two of his three years. Erdman said Forsee has no severance package and, as of yesterday, was off the university payroll.

Loyalka said money should not be a primary consideration when recruiting a candidate. "You get what you pay for," he said.

He said faculty and staff from all four campuses need to play a role in the selection process.

"We have to look forward to an orderly process in the selection of the next president," he said.

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COLUMBIA MISSOURIAN

A look back at Forsee's three years as UM System president

By MISSOURIAN STAFF

January 7, 2011 | 3:57 p.m. CST

The major events in Gary Forsee's tenure as the UM System president:

Feb. 18, 2008 — Gary Forsee assumes presidency of the University of Missouri system.

March 2008 — The House Budget Committee Chairman Rep. Allen Ictet, R-St. Louis County, announces state funds might be reduced by more than \$17 million.

April 2008 — At a meeting in Rolla, the UM System Board of Curators unanimously approves a 4.1 percent tuition increase.

- In his first State of the University report, Forsee presents data from the 2008 U.S. News and World Report ranking of colleges and universities. MU dropped from 88th in 2007 to 91st.

June 2008 — UM receives a 4.2 percent increase in the fiscal year 2009 operating budget from the legislature. The amount is less than the state's 2001 level due to a string of state budget cuts that began in 2001. Missouri ranks No. 47 in per-capita state spending on higher education.

June 2008 — The UM System Board of Curators extend Forsee's contract from three to five years. The extension defers the performance-based part of his salary for a full five-year term before payment would occur. His initial contract set his salary at \$400,000 per year, plus up to \$100,000 in annual incentive pay.

August 2008 — Forsee and MU Chancellor Brady Deaton announce a reorganization of MU's medical operations. University Health Care services and the UM System's

medical schools are to be consolidated under a new health science center, headed by a new vice-chancellor for health sciences.

September 2008 — Forsee describes the completion of the new Analytical Bio-Chemistry Laboratories facility at MU's Discovery Ridge Research Park as an accomplishment for the community, as well as a statement about MU's commitment to economic development.

October 2008 — UM System President Gary Forsee and his wife donate \$1 million for the installation of Cisco TelePresence videoconferencing system. Another \$1 million for the system is donated by Cisco Systems and AT&T.

November 2008 — Forsee announces a system-wide hiring freeze for most positions.

December 2008 — He reports possible budget reductions of up to 25 percent for fiscal year 2010 and meets with UM System Intercampus Faculty Council to discuss options.

January 2009 — Forsee asks faculty and staff on all four campuses to cut expenses in 14 specified areas.

- He issues statement supporting Gov. Jay Nixon's proposal to maintain current funding levels in exchange for no tuition increases.

February 2009 — Forsee asks the Board of Curators to grant him authority to institute furloughs and recommends that employees contribute to the system's retirement plan. In addition, he announces he will recommend there be no pay raises.

May 2009 — Forsee announces the elimination of 22 UM system positions in an effort to cut costs and introduces restrictions on travel and training, among other cost-cutting measures. He also strikes a deal with Gov. Jay Nixon for a tuition freeze for the second consecutive year.

September 2009 — Forsee announces a collaboration between MU and Cerner Corp. to form the Tiger Institute for Health Innovation. The institute would develop an online database of a patient's entire medical history.

November 2009 — Forsee declares the higher education funding model "broken."

December 2009 — Forsee announces that the troubled economy and reduced state funding will force the four-campus system to consider cost-cutting approaches. Possibilities, he states, include 3-year degrees and partnerships with local governments and developers on building projects

February 2010 — The UM System rolls out a three-year accountability measurement system, with 5 themes: teaching and learning, research and discovery, community service and engagement, economic development and developing and managing human, financial and physical resources. Chancellors of each campus would be held accountable and would have to speak with Forsee if performance in these areas did not meet expectations.

May 2010 — The UM president meets with community leaders for their assistance in helping MU explore ways to fund a performing arts center in Columbia. The proposed center would also house MU's School of Music.

Fall 2010 — Forsee notifies the Board of Curators that a request to increase tuition will be forthcoming; also that an in-state tuition freeze agreement between the governor and the university was not likely to continue into a third year.

December 2010 — Forsee tells the UM Board of Curators he will be taking an extended leave due to his wife's recent diagnosis of cancer.

Jan. 7, 2011 — He announces he will step down as president of the UM System.



Forsee's tenure gets high marks

Legislators saw him as effective.

By Janese Silvey

They worried about his lack of academic experience. They were concerned about his corporate background. And some even feared the University of Missouri System's Board of Curators — mostly conservative picks from then-Gov. Matt Blunt — was staging a “hostile takeover” of the last major public institution not under Republican control by hiring him.

In the end, Gary Forsee proved them wrong.

“I think he was a quick study,” MU Faculty Council Chairwoman Leona Rubin said. “He was not any of the things we were afraid of, having somebody from business come in and do academics. He tried to learn as much as he could, and he learned to respect what faculty research was all about.”

Forsee yesterday announced he was resigning from his post to be with his wife as she continues cancer treatment.

Even MU's most vocal critic and an early opponent of the president said that, in hindsight, Forsee did OK. “The best I can tell, Mr. Forsee was a well-intentioned man who lacked a great deal of experience, but he took his skills and acted in as fair of a way as he could,” said Eddie Adelstein, an associate professor in MU's Department of Pathology and Anatomical Sciences.

Forsee became a serious candidate for president in 2007 just a month after being ousted as chief executive officer of Sprint Nextel Corp. At that time, most members of the Board of Curators were conservatives, and some people believed Blunt had intentionally appointed curators who would not make decisions favorable to the university. Despite fears, though, Forsee became a staunch advocate for UM in the Capitol and across the state. One of his early goals was to make people understand why universities play an important role in the state's economy.

Forsee made college affordability a priority and worked with lawmakers to protect higher education funding while keeping tuition flat. He forged partnerships with private corporations in an effort to secure new revenues and streamlined operations across the four campuses to create efficiencies.

Forsee earned the respect of state lawmakers, members of Columbia's delegation said.

“That he was from a business background speaks volumes in Jefferson City,” said Mary Still, D-Columbia. “I don’t necessarily agree with that, but I understand it. It seems that garners a great deal of respect among legislators.”

Rep. Chris Kelly, D-Columbia, called Forsee a “tremendous president.” “He’s always been willing to fight, to actually, really fight for the university,” Kelly said. “He’s willing to stand up and say, ‘No.’ and I appreciate that.”

There’s no way to measure the impact Forsee’s absence will have this legislative session, Kelly said. However, advocacy groups such as the Flagship Council and Alumni Association are stronger now than before Forsee, he said.

Although he set big-picture academic agendas such as focusing on online learning, Forsee stayed out of the classroom, leaving education to academics on campus.

“President Forsee has done an amazing job of bringing together an entire community with respect to moving forward,” said George Justice, dean of MU’s graduate school. “I think what he did worked. He addressed the system as a business entity, and he rationalized the work that the system did” while leaving day-to-day academics to chancellors and deans.

“He was very effective in respecting the role chancellors play in managing business affairs and academic affairs,” MU Chancellor Brady Deaton said.

Forsee wasn’t a micromanager, Deaton said, but a partner.

Forsee privately announced his decision during a Monday meeting with curators in Kansas City, Chairman Warren Erdman said. Erdman spent that evening calling the rest of the board.

Few seemed surprised when Forsee made his decision public.

“I completely understand what he’s doing,” Rubin said. “There isn’t a single one of us, if we were in his shoes, who wouldn’t do the exact same thing. But we’re unhappy to see him go.”

Forsee is “a devoted family man,” Adelstein said. “That has clearly taken the highest priority, and no one can fault him for that.”

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Timeline of Forsee's tenure

UM President Gary Forsee announced his retirement today. His tenure has been a busy one.

Oct. 2007 – Sprint Nextel Corp. forces out Chairman and CEO Gary Forsee

Nov. 2007 – Forsee becomes the focus of the University of Missouri System's search to replace Elson Floyd.

Dec. 2007 -- Forsee named system president.

Feb. 2008 – Forsee officially starts duties.

March 2008 – The Associated Press reveals Forsee receives \$84,325 a month for life, as well as millions in company stock, under his employment agreement with Sprint.

June 2008 – The Board of Curators extends Forsee's contract from three years to five years.

July 2008 – Forsee taps Leo Morton as interim chancellor of UM-Kansas City. Morton would go on to be appointed permanent chancellor.

Aug. 2008 – Forsee announces a reorganization of MU Health Care to consolidate medical education with research and clinical practices.

Oct. 2008 – Forsee donates \$1 million to install a videoconferencing center on all four campuses. The telepresence center allows curators to meet from remote locations.

Nov. 2008 – Forsee announces a system-wide hiring freeze.

Feb. 2009 – The system announces employees must start contributing to their retirement plans.

April 2009 – Forsee organizes, hosts first energy conference on the MU campus. Oilman T. Boone Pickens is keynote speaker.

May 2009 – Forsee announces plan to eliminate 15 positions, reorganize system offices.

July 2009 – Forsee petitions board to issue \$332 million in bonds to finance facility projects.

Sept. 2009 – Forsee announces a \$100 million partnership with Cerner Corp. to create the Tiger Institute, promoting research and development of electronic medical records.

Nov. 2009 – Forsee angers some when he writes to federal lawmakers asking them to oppose cap-and-trade legislation.

Jan. 2010 – Forsee launches \$5 million enterprise fund to provide funding for companies willing to commercialize UM-related research. The system also announces funding to award to faculty members who come up with new ways of delivering online education.

May 2010 – Curators approve funding for Ellis Fischel Cancer Center.

Oct. 2010 – Forsee advocates for increase in state cigarette tax.

Dec. 2010 – Forsee announces temporary leave from his role in light of his wife's cancer diagnosis.

Jan. 2011 – Forsee resigns.

This article was published on page



A version of this story appeared in many outlets across the nation.

New tests detecting salmonella, E. coli faster

Updated: Saturday, 08 Jan 2011, 4:34 PM EST
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DENVER - Food safety scientists are looking for faster ways to detect salmonella, E. coli, listeria and other pathogens within hours or minutes instead of days.

The goal is to catch contaminated food before it leaves a processing facility, thereby averting costly recalls. It also could mean a longer shelf life for products, if companies don't have to wait as long for tests to show that food is safe before shipping it.

"Traditional salmonella tests can take five days," said Azlin Mustapha, an associate professor of food science at the University of Missouri. "Companies don't have that time to wait."

In December, Agilent Technologies Inc. said it was working with the University of California, Davis on getting results from food safety tests within hours instead of days. And DuPont has worked with U.S. Department of Agriculture researchers on a test that offers results on E. coli within as little as eight hours.

In early 2011, Beacon Food Safety, based in Greenwood Village, Colo., plans to introduce a device that can detect 112 pathogens at the same time, with results available in about 30 minutes. President Steve Stroud says the technology used is far more sensitive than what's been available previously for tests of its kind.

According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, the U.S. has an estimated 48 million cases of foodborne disease each year and about 3,000 related deaths.

Beacon Food Safety's device, about the size of a thumb drive, contains a chip with 112 tiny detectors in an area smaller than a dime. A user places a sample on the detectors, plugs the device into a computer, and software "reads" light that is emitted when a detector finds a pathogen. The user would simply see a red light on the screen indicating if a sample is contaminated.

The light-emitting protein Beacon uses comes from a deep sea crustacean and is 10,000 times brighter than what many existing tests use. Today Beacon reproduces the protein in the lab.

Based on what Beacon has said publicly about its device, "It is very, very convenient because anyone in a plant can just do it," said Mustapha, who is not affiliated with the company.

While initial customers might be food processors or restaurants, Beacon Food Safety envisions its system one day making it to consumers.

The company has spent about \$3 million developing the chip. Each disposable test would cost about \$20, CEO Bill Locatis said.

Traditional tests have relied on growing samples that can be checked for pathogens.

She herself has developed lab tests to detect live salmonella in poultry and eggs and E. coli in beef within hours. Her method uses a dye so scientists can distinguish between live and dead cells in a sample, which is important because dead cells won't make people sick.

If testers want to hunt down just 10 cells of bacteria, it could take 12 hours, but her method still would reduce the amount of false positives, Mustapha said.

Unlike other pathogens, as few as 10 cells of E. coli can cause sickness in humans, Mustapha said.

Beacon's device also only looks for live cells. So far it can detect as few as 75 cells, Beacon Biotechnology CEO Fred Mitchell said. Beacon is working to detect about half that level without substantially raising the time it takes to get results, Mitchell said.

Jitu Patel, a lead scientist with USDA's Agricultural Research Service, said the goal should be detecting just one cell to reduce the chance of a false negative result.

"When there's a false negative, it's not good for the human health, because there's a false assurance that the product is safe," he said.

He also said lower detection levels could help the elderly or others who are more susceptible to disease.



KOMU returns to Mediacom lineup

By Andrew Denney

After a bitter stalemate between KOMU and Mediacom over contract negotiations that resulted in a four-day blackout of programming from NBC and The CW for Mediacom cable customers, the two sides reached an agreement yesterday.

Phyllis Peters, a spokeswoman for Mediacom, said the cable provider put KOMU back into its lineup yesterday for customers in the Columbia/Jefferson City market. About 30,000 cable subscribers were affected by the blackout.

Since July, the two sides had been locked in negotiations over the renewal of KOMU's contract with the cable provider. For the past three years, KOMU had received advertising money and non-cash compensation from the cable provider. When negotiations for a new contract began, KOMU requested that the station receive direct payment from Mediacom, and the two parties began to disagree on how much payment the station should receive.

Matt Garrett, director of audience development for KOMU, said that as part of the three-year contract the station will sign with the cable provider, it will receive direct payment for its programming.

Peters said the agreement was "mutually beneficial," but terms of the agreement were not specified.

Although the blackout, which began at midnight Tuesday, might have raised the ire of Mediacom customers faced with missing episodes of "The Office" and "The Oprah Winfrey Show," Peters said that, if the company had immediately caved to KOMU's demands, other local broadcasters could start demanding higher compensation rates, thus possibly raising the costs of Mediacom's operation. Waiting for an acceptable agreement between the two entities to develop, she said, was in the best interest of Mediacom's customers.

"It was in their interest that we not take a bad deal," Peters said.

Hours before the agreement was reached, Missouri Attorney General Chris Koster had attempted to intervene on behalf of consumers, whom he said had been unfairly affected by the removal of KOMU from Mediacom's lineup.

“It is just plain wrong to think that you can drop one of the major networks, like NBC, and maintain that the contract between the provider and the consumer hasn’t materially changed to the detriment of the consumer,” Koster said in a news release.

During the days KOMU was out of Mediacom’s lineup, both sides worked to keep viewers in their own favor, even planning dueling watch parties for today’s NFL playoff games.

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COLUMBIA MISSOURIAN

KOMU, Mediacom reach retransmission agreement

By Eve Edelheit

January 7, 2011 | 6:07 p.m. CST

COLUMBIA — KOMU-TV and Mediacom agreed Friday on a retransmission agreement for programming of KOMU 8, Mid-Missouri's CW and Universal Sports.

Negotiations began in July for the contract and had to be extended over the weekend before programming expired on Tuesday morning at 12:01 a.m.

"We are extremely happy to reach a fair and mutually beneficial agreement with Mediacom," KOMU 8 General Manager Marty Siddall said. "We are pleased that our audience and their subscribers will again be receiving NBC programming, local news, weather, sports and public services information. We appreciate the patience of our viewers and look forward to being a welcome guest in their homes again."

During the past couple of weeks, several offers were made and declined by both parties. Issues regarding how much KOMU was requesting for programming compensation and contract length were among the reasons for the difficulty during contract discussions.

"Both parties are relieved that they were able to come to a mutually beneficial agreement," said Matt Garrett, the director of audience development at KOMU. "We are happy about the three-year contract."

Programming will resume Friday evening on the KOMU 8 channel. According to Mediacom's news release, additional terms of the agreement will not be disclosed.

"We're pleased that we have gotten this agreement reached," Mediacom spokeswoman Phyllis Peters said.

Earlier Friday afternoon, Missouri Attorney General Chris Koster involved himself in the negotiations between Mediacom and KOMU. In a letter to Tom Larsen, Mediacom's vice president of legal and public affairs, Koster expressed his concern for mid-Missouri Mediacom subscribers.

"Consumers must not be the ones to bear the risk when negotiations break down in a contractual business dispute," Koster said in the letter to Larsen.

Koster went on to request several things in the letter from Larsen and Mediacom:

- A written confirmation of substitute programming with which Mediacom is filling the previous KOMU channels.
- An additional confirmation that the substitute service won't be limited to those customers with digital service.
- For the duration of the dispute, Mediacom will make On-Demand boxes available to all customers without charge for one year.
- An evaluation of Mediacom's ability to provide a "pro-rata service credit" to all mid-Missouri subscribers. This credit would be based on how long the negotiations lasts.
- A report on Mediacom's "willingness" to credit its customers with the rebate.
- A detailed analysis for every channel on the equation used to determine programming rates that customers are charged. He went on to specifically point out the analysis on KOMU and Mid-Missouri CW in regards to what subscribers have to pay for those channels. Koster's office will use this data to make an assessment of feasibility for Mediacom Communications providing a service credit.

Koster wasn't alone in his efforts to protect cable customers from cable blackouts over retransmission fee contracts. In early December, the FCC announced efforts to better protect consumers from dropped programming.

Across the country, more and more networks are negotiating for new retransmission deals with cable providers. How the government responds to these deals varies.

"It depends on where the network is located," Peters said. "It could be state or local government that has the responsibility."

While Mediacom had filled the three channels with substitute programning, Koster acknowledged the difference between the substitutions and the previous programming.

"Even with these accommodations, Missouri subscribers are still being deprived valuable programming in the form of local news and weather, syndicated programming and live NBC national programming, including the upcoming weekend NFL playoff games," Koster said in his letter.

Mediacom had already taken action regarding the NFL playoff games before the deal was reached by hosting a "Wildcard Watch" party at Harpo's Sports Bar on Saturday. After reaching the agreement, Mediacom invited KOMU employees to the party.



Tenure: The strange case of Greg Engel

By Henry J. Waters III

I have been doing my best to notice goings-on at the University of Missouri and other similar institutions, but never have I seen the likes of faculty action in the MU College of Engineering against colleague Greg Engel.

The associate professor has so irritated others in his department that no fewer than 18 of them signed a complaint sent last month to MU Provost Brian Foster urging Engel's tenure be revoked and his employment terminated.

The complaint says Engel is rude, ineffective and discriminates against women and minorities. Though not mentioned in the formal complaint, Engel also incurred wrath over his handling of a research grant, prompting administrators to remove him as the head of the project even though his work earned the grant.

For higher education to even consider removing tenure is almost unprecedented. I can't remember a time when as many as 18 faculty members openly called for the removal of a colleague.

Enough about Engel's behavior has been reported to give a sense of his prickly nature. After he was removed from control of his grant, he refused to work on the project. His record contains a number of complaints about how he treated students and conducted classes. But it's quite beyond the scope of this treatise to pass final judgment on Engel's fitness. Instead, let us ponder how the university's personnel system deals with faculty tenure.

The institution of tenure has merit, as any member of the American Association of University Professors will attest, but when the time comes, deans and provosts and chancellors must have a more propitious way to fire faculty members.

The Engel case gives a rare example. The process of developing a case for his removal seems laborious enough. It is unlikely he would be so close to removal merely for teaching incompetence. His belligerent, irritating personality seems the key. Outsiders can only imagine how persistently he went about alienating faculty colleagues to become such an outlier.

If he merely was a D-plus teacher with a nice, cooperative demeanor, his colleagues surely would tolerate his presence on staff and his tenure would go unchallenged. That's the other side of tenure. It protects academic freedom but also helps perpetuate mediocrity or trouble in the ranks.

As this treatise winds down, I would like to be on record fundamentally supporting tenure. If carefully granted, it rewards the best faculty and does indeed protect academic freedom. Maintaining placidity in the ranks is not always the same as promoting the quality of teaching.

But reasonable collaboration in a faculty is a positive factor, and bosses should have a better way to maintain it. Their hesitation is mostly self-imposed. They will bend over backward to avoid firing a tenured professor. They believe in tenure but also know they must go through a tedious process to mitigate certain pushback from the AAUP.

With such an outpouring from pcers, the Engel case seems about as well documented as any is likely to be. In private industry, he would be gone by now. In higher education, his employment status remains in limbo.

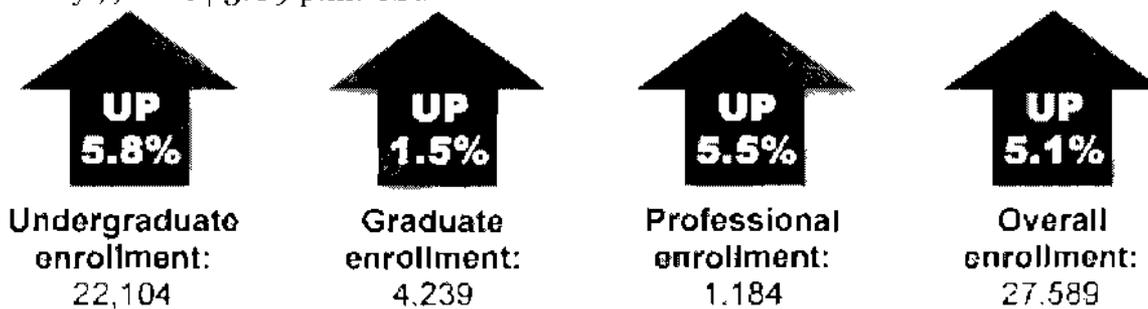
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COLUMBIA MISSOURIAN

MU enrollment increases for spring semester, no housing issues

By [Siyu Hu](#)

January 7, 2011 | 3:09 p.m. CST



Note: Totals as of Jan. 3, 2011

Attendance at MU will increase slightly this Spring semester compared with last year's totals. Figures represent students enrolled as of Jan. 3. | [Robert Dibrell](#)

COLUMBIA — It might not be obvious, but MU will be a little more crowded this spring semester.

The number of students enrolled at MU two weeks before the spring semester begins increased 5.1 percent from 2010, from 26,256 to 27,589, according to statistics provided by MU spokesman Christian Basi.

Three types of students increased in number:

- Undergraduate student enrollment increased 5.8 percent, to 22,104 from 20,895.
- Graduate student enrollment increased 1.5 percent, to 4,301 from 4,239.
- Professional student enrollment increased 5.5 percent, to 1,184 from 1,122.

"It's a nice and modest increase," Basi said. All the numbers, though, are still preliminary and "are more than likely to change," he added.

Despite the increase in students, Kristen Temple, associated director for Residential Academic Programs, said housing won't be an issue in the coming semester.

“Usually in spring semester, we wouldn’t anticipate running out of space unless there is an unanticipated surge,” Temple said.

Roughly 200 new residential hall contracts were signed as of Thursday, and 6,284 fall semester students are returning to the halls, according to the Office of Residential Life.

It is likely that there will be enough beds for all students that have a need, Temple said. Students can also apply for housing as long as there is space, she added.

All 53 students who remained housed in Prunty Hall on the Stephens College campus because of a housing shortage this past fall have been reassigned to either core residence halls or extended campus housing.

At the end of the fall semester, the students who were living in Prunty Hall were given boxes for their personal belongings. Tuesday, the university hired White Moving & Storage to take the boxes to the students' new addresses and e-mailed the new housing assignments, Temple said.

Residence halls are closed for winter break and will reopen Jan. 13. Classes begin Jan. 18.

Gillett Hall, currently under renovation, will reopen in August 2011, and Mark Twain Residence Hall will close in December 2011, Temple said.