

AUG 03 2011



MU Health Care to renew satisfaction effort

By Janese Silvey

University of Missouri Health Care will try again to boost patient satisfaction by enticing employees with end-of-year bonuses after failing to meet the goal this year.

The health system had hoped to see patient satisfaction climb from 88.1 percent to 90 percent by July 1. Last summer, administrators offered each full-time employee an \$800 bonus and part-time employees a percentage of that amount if the goal was met.

Patient satisfaction grew during the fiscal year but not enough. By July 1, the overall satisfaction at MU's hospitals and clinics was 89.1 percent.

"Although we didn't meet the goal for the year, our patient satisfaction for the past five years has never been higher," spokeswoman Mary Jenkins said. Raising the score "an entire point is something that's very hard to do."

The health system has announced it will again offer \$800 incentives but not necessarily for a 90 percent satisfaction rate. A new satisfaction target will be announced in October and will be based on patient survey results from last month, this month and September.

Sue Kopfle, chief human resources officer for MU Health Care, did not return a Tribune phone call but sent a statement through Jenkins.

"We're extremely proud of all the employees of University of Missouri Health Care for their dedication to patient- and family-centered care," Kopfle said. "It's due to the efforts of our workforce that we made significant progress in improving the patient experience throughout our hospitals and clinics during the past year. We are looking forward to carrying the momentum forward, and we plan to offer an incentive based on patient satisfaction and financial goals again in 2012."

The system is holding ongoing "intensive training" sessions to help employees learn to better focus on patients, Jenkins said. More than 2,000 of the roughly 5,000 health care employees participated in those sessions this past fiscal year.

The satisfaction increase comes a year after Kopfle's office launched a talent assessment program that requires candidates seeking nursing, managerial and physician leadership jobs to take a personality test. A Nebraska-based private company, Talent Plus, conducts telephone interviews aimed to see whether a candidate will be successful and satisfied in the job.

Jenkins stopped short of crediting the talent assessment program for the patient satisfaction increase, saying she has no data to back that up.

“But we’ve definitely been concentrating on hiring the right people for the right jobs,” she said.

Paying out the incentives also is dependent on MU Health Care seeing at least \$30 million in profits during the fiscal year, a goal that was met by June 1, Jenkins said. The June numbers are still being tallied, so she did not have the final profit amount. The hospital system has had margins of more than \$30 million for the past five years.

Reach Janese Silvey at 573-815-1705 or e-mail jsilvey@columbiatribune.com.



Late broadcast legend was 'fiercely loyal' alum

By Janese Silvey

Dean Mills, dean of the Missouri School of Journalism, saw his friend Elmer Lower become “cranky” just once, “when he couldn’t get the latest Missouri sports scores at his Florida retirement home.”

Lower, the former ABC News president who died last Tuesday at the age of 98, was “fiercely loyal” to Missouri, Mills said. “Even though he was in a wheelchair at the time, he insisted in coming back to Mizzou for the school’s centennial celebration in 2008,” Mills said in an email.

Lower attended the University of Missouri in the early 1930s, during which time he befriended Tennessee Williams, according to the MU Alumni Association. He earned his bachelor’s degree in journalism in 1933 and spent the next decade as a reporter. In 1942, he became a field representative and photojournalist for the U.S. Office of War Information, a job that took him overseas.

Lower continued to job-hop in the 1950s and, in 1963, became president of ABC News in New York, where he would serve until mandatory retirement at age 65.

Lower hardly retired. Instead, he earned a master’s degree in public law and government from Columbia University in 1970 and joined the Missouri School of Journalism faculty as a broadcast professor in 1978. In 1982 and 1983, Lower served as interim dean of the journalism school.

“Lower was, as anyone in the broadcast industry will tell you, a giant in the industry — one of the handful of people who helped create the golden age of broadcast journalism,” Mills said in an email. “He was also a superb human being.”

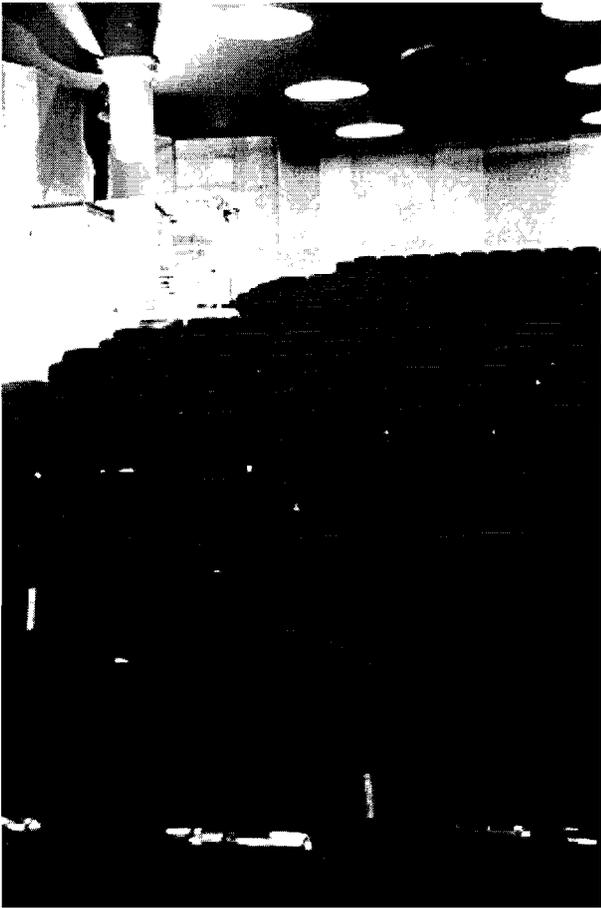
Mills described him as funny, warm and upbeat. And the one time he was cranky was short-lived. “We arranged for the Missouri staff to fax” Missouri scores to him in Florida, Mills said.

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MISSOURIAN

Jesse Auditorium gets \$1 million renovation

Tuesday, August 2, 2011 | 6:51 p.m. CDT



A worker paints a column in Jesse Auditorium as part of a \$1 million renovation. The auditorium's 1,732 seats were also replaced.

! [CHERISH GRIMM](#)

BY MISSOURIAN STAFF

If the seats at Jesse Auditorium feel a little more comfy this fall, it's because they're new. So are the paint and the carpet. John Murray, building coordinator for Jesse Hall, said the last major renovation was about 15 years ago, but it's been more than 30 years since the 1,732 seats were replaced. The project cost about \$1 million, Campus Facilities spokeswoman Karlan Seville said.

MISSOURIAN

MU wrestling team member dies in car accident

Tuesday, August 2, 2011 | 7:50 p.m. CDT; updated 10:11 p.m. CDT, Tuesday, August 2, 2011

BY BI YOO

HANNIBAL — MU student Phillip Perry, a member of last year's wrestling team, died in a car crash early Tuesday morning on Route 168, 2 miles west of Hannibal.

According to a Missouri State Highway Patrol report, at about 2:30 a.m., Perry overcorrected his steering when he was on Route 168 and ran off the left side of the road. The vehicle overturned and hit the rootball of a tree, the report stated.

Perry, 19, from Hannibal, is listed as a freshman majoring in secondary education.

Jim Coniglio, who was Perry's high school coach for four years, said he was a three-time medalist when he was in high school.

"It's tragic loss," Coniglio said. "He was a good kid — gifted, athletic."

During his wrestling career at Hannibal High School, Perry was an All-American and was named All-State three times, according to his profile on the MU Athletics website.

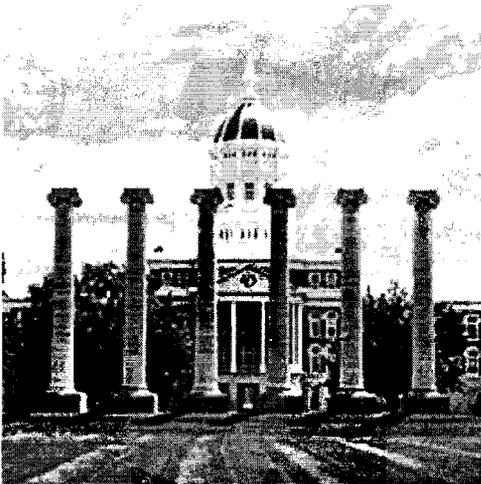
Missourian reporter Abby Eisenberg contributed to this article.

St. Louis Business Journal

Columbia makes Forbes' 'Best Small Places for Business and Careers'

St. Louis Business Journal - by Matthew Hibbard

Date: Tuesday, August 2, 2011, 3:57pm CDT



University of Missouri, Columbia, Mo.

The college town known for its Shakespeare's Pizza and historic columns ranked No. 8 on Forbes' Best Small Places for Business and Careers list.

The list looked at 12 measurements when compiling the list. Those metrics include job growth (past and projected), costs (business and living), income growth, educational attainment and projected economic growth. Data such as crime rates, cultural and recreational opportunities and net migration patterns were also taken into account.

According to the list, Columbia, Mo., has a median income of \$47,090 and an unemployment rate of 5.6 percent. Job growth last year was at 1.6 percent with a projected annual job growth of 1.1 percent.

The cost of living is 9.2 percent, below the national average. An average home price costs about \$146,000.

The city, which is dominated by three main employers, education, health care and insurance companies, saw a net migration of 1,450 move into its city limits.

The college town's nickname, the "Athens of Missouri," further depicts the majority of its population and access to education in the community. High school attainment rates were 91.3 percent, while college attainment rates were at 43.5 percent. About 18.7 percent of college student graduate.

IBM announced last year the opening of a technology service delivery center in the area. The company, which will employ 800 people, said it chose Columbia due to the work force's talent and skills.

The list noted several cultural events the city hosts each year, including the Roots N Blues N BBQ festival and the Ragtag Cinema's popular True/False Film Festival. Columbia also has several performing arts venues, including the Missouri Theatre Center for the Arts, the Jesse Auditorium and the **University of Missouri's** Museum of Art and Archeology.

Manhattan, Kan., home of the **Kansas State** Wildcats, took the top spot, followed by Sioux Falls, S.D., and Bismark, N.D.

Moody's Economy.com provided much of the data, including the economic forecasts. **Bert Sperling**, founder of Sperling's BestPlaces, compiled the culture and leisure index for Forbes and also crunched the crime number. The college attainment data was compiled by the **Census Bureau**.



Nixon, school administrators discuss K-12 goals

Gov. Jay Nixon met with school administrators from across this state this morning at the Holiday Inn Select Executive Center as they discussed a common goal — moving Missouri into one of the country's top 10 states for K-12 education by 2020.

Right now, Missouri ranks in the middle for areas including National Assessment for Education Progress test scores, ACT test scores, AP exam scores and percentage of students completing a bachelor's degree in six years or less. Although moving from the middle of the pack to the top 10 in less than 10 years is a lofty goal, Nixon said Missouri can, and must, reach that goal by 2020.

"We don't say these words idly. We want to implement a plan to succeed in every corner of the state. It is vital to the work we do. ... The state can't succeed until schools succeed," Nixon told the administrators.

Missouri schools already have seen success in some areas, Nixon said, pointing to Missouri's rank as 11th in the nation for high school graduates and improved test scores in recent years.

But there are areas where major improvements need to be made, Nixon said, such as the percent of graduates taking AP exams and percent scoring a three or higher on the exam, where Missouri ranks 49th and 47th respectively.

The Missouri Department of Elementary and Secondary Education has developed a detailed plan called "10 by 20" that includes strategies such as implementing a more rigorous assessment system, expanding opportunities for early childhood education and improving the system for recruitment and support for teachers.

"We will go from good to great, and we will be in the top 10," Nixon said. But to do that, he said, every school district must do its part.

Locally, Columbia Public Schools has some areas of success and some that need improvement, Superintendent Chris Belcher said.

"We are right on target with early childhood," Belcher said, referring to a recently expanded program Title I preschool program that served 579 students in the 2010-11 school year, an increase of more than 200 students since 2006.

Another major area of success is making sure students are college- and career-ready, Belcher said, pointing to partnerships with local colleges and universities.

The largest area in need of improvement, Belcher said, is the achievement gap, or academic disparities between minority students and students who come from poverty and all other students. The district held two community meetings in the past year and is working to partner with other local organizations to tackle the problem.

The most challenging part of continuing success or meeting new goals, Belcher said, will be obtaining the funding to do so.

“I am proud of what we do, but I have to take the practical side that the revenue has to be there to maintain programs.” he said.

Education funding is a statewide problem, Nixon said, with Missouri ranking 35th in the nation for K-12 funding.

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