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COLUMBIA DAILY
TRIBUNE

UM president announcement not likely this week

It's unlikely the University of Missouri System will announce a president by the end of this week, a spokeswoman said.

The system's Board of Curators is having a regularly scheduled meeting Thursday and Friday on the St. Louis campus.

The presidential advisory committee, made up of faculty, alumni and student representatives, met for roughly six hours in Columbia behind closed doors on Tuesday. UM spokeswoman Jennifer Hollingshead said they met one candidate.

After that meeting, the committee chairman, Hal Williamson, said curators Chairman Warren Erdman would hold his regularly scheduled news conference Friday after the business session, Hollingshead said.

She said reports indicating there will be a special news conference or that an announcement is coming this week are inaccurate. "It's not likely there's going to be an announcement," she said.

ST. LOUIS POST-DISPATCH

Local news digest

Posted: Wednesday, December 7, 2011 12:00 am |

COLUMBIA, MO. > One finalist remains for UM president — The yearlong search for a new University of Missouri president is down to a single, unnamed finalist.

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"We interviewed one candidate," said Hal Williamson, vice chancellor for the University of Missouri Health System and chairman of the advisory group. "It's up to the Board of Curators from here."

The curators are seeking a replacement for Gary Forsee, who stepped down as president in January to care for his wife as she battles cancer. Interim president Steve Owens has said he is not a candidate for the permanent job and expects to resume his duties as general counsel.

Yearlong Missouri presidential search nears finish

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"We interviewed one candidate," said Hal Williamson, vice chancellor for the University of Missouri Health System and chairman of the advisory group. "It's up to the Board of Curators from here."

The curators are seeking a replacement for Gary Forsee, who stepped down as president in January to care for his wife as she battles cancer. Interim president Steve Owens has said he is not a candidate for the permanent job and expects to resume his duties as general counsel.

Williamson declined to name the remaining candidate, consistent with the confidential search undertaken by the four-campus system's governing board. Curators' chairman Warren Erdman did not immediately respond to several telephone messages Tuesday afternoon.

Erdman and his colleagues are no doubt mindful of the previous presidential search, in which Forsee was chosen only after New Jersey businessman Terry Sutter emerged in 2007 as the preferred candidate to replace Elson Floyd, and was publicly identified.

Sutter instead opted to become chief operating officer of a Florida steel manufacturer. Former congressman Kenny Hulshof, a Columbia Republican, also was a finalist during that search but was not offered the job.

Erdman has said there is no timetable for a decision, but university officials are eager to have a new hire in place by January, when lawmakers return to Jefferson City for the annual legislative session.

A strong presence in Jefferson City is seen as critical for the university's new leader, as the system seeks to reverse – or at least stem– a decade of decreasing public subsidies. Forsee and Gov. Jay Nixon were the chief architects of plan that froze tuition at Missouri's public colleges and universities for two years in exchange for relatively modest budget cuts in higher education. No such plans are in place for the coming year.

COLUMBIA MISSOURIAN

New UM System president not likely to be named this week

By Zach Murdock

December 6, 2011 | 6:02 p.m. CST

COLUMBIA — It is "extremely unlikely" a new president for the University of Missouri System will be named this week, UM System spokeswoman Jennifer Hollingshead* said Tuesday.

Hollingshead said this after a presidential search advisory committee met for almost five hours with one finalist at Mizzou Arena. The finalist's name was not disclosed.

After the meeting Tuesday, Hal Williamson, chairman of the advisory committee and MU Health Care vice chancellor, said that Warren Erdman, chairman of the UM System Board of Curators, and curator-to-be Craig Van Matre attended the meeting in person and that curators Wayne Goode and David Bradley joined the meeting by phone.

Those curators will present the committee's findings in an executive session Thursday morning when the full board meets as the presidential search committee before public meetings begin at 1 p.m. The session is part of the regularly scheduled December board meeting, held Thursday and Friday at the University of Missouri-St. Louis. Erdman will address the presidential search in the scheduled press conference Friday even though the board will not name a new president.

Williamson said the search for the next president remains a closed, confidential process and that the advisory committee could not comment on any specifics about the candidate. "It's up to the Board of Curators from here," he added.

Erdman said Monday he could not comment on the number of finalists or whether those candidates have been notified of their status as finalists. He said the curators will consider the advisory committee's report Thursday and decide where to go from there at that time.

The search is in its 11th month and began after former President Gary Forsee stepped down in January to care for his ill wife. The advisory committee — made up of students, faculty and alumni from throughout the UM System — is charged with reviewing a list of finalists and providing the board with feedback.

Williamson said the advisory committee operates at the will of the curators and will reconvene if asked to do so.



Reynolds Journalism Institute leader retires

By Janese Silvey

For years, Pam Johnson has been urging newsrooms and media outlets to take a step back and reassess their work.

"Our worst enemy is that we don't stop often enough to assess how we are really doing," she said.

This fall, Johnson had to take her own advice. The first director of the Reynolds Journalism Institute on the University of Missouri campus had a health scare that forced her to take leave, giving her a rare opportunity for personal reflection. Last month, when she turned 65, Johnson officially retired.

"I never realized I could stay home and love it," said Johnson, who wouldn't specify her health issue but said it's in check. "There are so many things I want to do."

Johnson's retirement caps a career in media that began and ended at MU over the course of more than four decades.

A 1969 MU graduate, Johnson began duties at RJI in 2004, four years before the center opened its doors. During those early years, she pulled together a team of directors who would be charged with leading journalism into the next century.

"Pam took RJI from a staff of two in a makeshift office to a thriving research and development center with journalism," said Dean Mills, dean of the School of Journalism. "Her years of experience as a nationally admired editor and leader of editors made her the perfect person to get RJI off to a great start."

For Johnson, it was the ideal position. She remembers telling Mills, "This is my job," when he called in 2004 to notify her of the opening.

"They were digging into the next wave of where journalism was going, and I felt like I could really help make a difference," she said. "We would bring journalism to the forefront through the J-school and this institute and look at the big picture."

Johnson has been a big-picture person since she began in the profession. She realized early in her career that she wanted to be an editor and "make a difference in what a newspaper was doing."

After copy editing and assistant management stints — including one at The Kansas City Star, where her team earned a Pulitzer Prize for coverage of a skywalk collapse at a Hyatt Hotel — Johnson snagged her first managing editor position at The Phoenix Gazette in Arizona. She was promoted within the company to the rank of executive editor and senior vice president at The Republic, a larger sister paper.

Johnson came back to Columbia after serving on the leadership faculty at the Poynter Institute for Media Studies, where she coached editors.

Retiring is bittersweet, Johnson said, but she is excited about more opportunities to visit her children out of state and hang out with her puppy, Norm Devine — named after former Missouri basketball Coach Norm Stewart and former football Coach Dan Devine.

Johnson has some advice for whomever fills her shoes at RJI: “Believe in the people who work for you,” she said. “Give freedom to the people who have the ideas and the excitement.”

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ST. LOUIS POST-DISPATCH

Schools take a new approach to handling suicides

BY JESSICA BOCK • jbock@post-dispatch.com > 314-340-8228 | Posted: Wednesday, December 7, 2011 12:00 am |

Counselors will be available to students throughout the day.

It's the standard response that follows most of the sad announcements that no school ever wants to have to make — a student has died by taking his or her own life.

Now, with help from a training program at the University of Missouri-Columbia, counselors from school districts statewide are developing more than just an offer to talk in the aftermath of a suicide to help their fellow students cope. They're also taking more measures to prevent others from the same ending.

"It used to be we didn't talk about suicide, and we don't want to believe that stuff happens," said Julie Harrison, coordinator of guidance and counseling for the Parkway School District. "We're starting to talk about it now."

How to handle the aftermath of a student suicide has long been one of the more vexing questions in education. Teachers and counselors worry that if they say too much about the death, they risk glorifying the suicide — potentially leading to copycats. *But failing to respond also carries profound risks.*

At Parkway, Harrison said, *individual schools in the district previously each handled suicide in different ways.*

The training from the University of Missouri has led to a more unified approach at Parkway and other school districts such as Maplewood Richmond Heights, Lindbergh and St. Louis Public Schools, one that experts say is grounded in the latest research on suicide.

Harrison said the training pushed her and other counselors to create a plan with two local agencies, Kids Under Twenty-One, or KUTO, and CHADS Coalition for Mental Health, to present workshops to students in grades 7 to 12 about suicide and mental health issues. They want to officially draft the procedures into district policy and mandate suicide response and prevention training for all employees.

When a suicide happens, Parkway now takes several steps when alerting other students and teachers of the death.

Teachers and counselors identify the student's best friends and reach out to them personally. They ask them about anyone else who should know. A counselor and administrator follow the student's schedule throughout the day and check in with each class. They give students a chance to talk about the student.

The students are allowed to call their parents and leave school, if necessary. And teachers and staff continuously check the halls and bathrooms throughout the day to make sure students aren't upset and alone.

PROGRAM HONORED

Two years ago, after recognizing a growing need for student mental health training, MU administrators developed the Mental Health Leadership Academy as a way to educate teachers under a "train the trainer" model. The teachers and counselors have since gone back into their district and told others what they've learned. The program was recently recognized by the National Network for Educational Renewal, a group that studies best practices in teacher training.

"Kids spend a majority of their day in school, and so we're trying to spread the word and be more proactive," said James Koller, a professor emeritus at MU who worked with the Missouri Department of Mental Health on suicide prevention to develop the program and train teachers, many of which did not have specific courses on the issue previously. The training encouraged schools to set up systems to identify kids at risk and recognize those who demonstrate warning signs, he said.

Suicide is the third leading cause of death among people ages 15 to 24, according to the National Institute of Mental Health. Teenagers can be particularly susceptible because of the stresses of growing up. Young people can lack the network of support adults have or experience in dealing with problems, counselors say.

In St. Louis County, the medical examiner's office has recorded four teenage suicides this year. Last year, there were three.

A survey last year of Missouri students by the Missouri Institute of Mental Health found that nearly 13 percent of those surveyed said they had considered suicide in the last year and a little more than 9 percent had made a plan to commit suicide.

Teachers and school staff want more resources and information, and the institutions that educate them are responding. In the Normandy School District, a group of parent liaisons recently took a course in Mental Health First Aid offered by St. Louis Community College.

A SHIFT ON EDUCATION

Dan Lowry, co-director of the Missouri Partnership for Education Renewal at MU that offers the Mental Health Leadership Academy, said education in the United States has undergone a dramatic shift throughout the last 40 years. A school counselor once talked to students about their career options. Today, they must handle an array of student mental health issues. MPER did the background work and research on the policies that work for suicide prevention and training, he said.

As a result, schools now have a more comprehensive approach with more emphasis on awareness, education and support, said Carol Sosa, intervention counselor at Lindbergh Schools. All teachers in the

district now have a yearly training on warning signs of suicide and the steps they should take should they notice them in a student. The statistics demand this response, she said.

"It's a more open conversation now," Sosa said. "We've got to pay attention to this. Teachers really are the front line and we are counting on them to be the eyes and ears."

DAILY NEWS

NEW YORK'S HOMETOWN NEWSPAPER

Low vitamin D levels linked to type 2 diabetes in obese kids

Children with lower levels of vitamin D had higher degrees of insulin resistance

Another study underscoring the importance of the sunshine vitamin has found that low vitamin D levels in obese children could be a precursor to the development of type 2 diabetes.

To be published in the January 2012 edition of the Journal of Clinical Endocrinology & Metabolism, the study found that obese children with lower levels of vitamin D had higher degrees of insulin resistance, researchers said.

Though they stopped short of concluding that vitamin D deficiency causes abnormal glucose metabolism, researchers from the University of Texas said their study suggests that low vitamin D levels may play a role in the development of type 2 diabetes.

In the study, scientists measured vitamin D levels, blood sugar levels, serum insulin, BMI and blood pressure in 411 obese children and 87 non-overweight kids.

Participants were asked to provide their dietary information like soda, juice and milk consumption, average fruit and vegetable intake and breakfast-eating habits.

What emerged were clear associations between lower vitamin D levels in obese children who had poor dietary habits like skipping breakfast, and increased consumption of soda and juice, researchers said.

Meanwhile, a study published last month out of the University of Missouri-Columbia found that obese teenagers need significantly more vitamin D than their leaner counterparts -- seven times more than the current daily recommended intake of 600 International Units (IU).

That's because obese adolescents absorb vitamin D in their fat stores and are about half as efficient as their leaner counterparts at metabolizing their benefits, researchers said.

Their study called for obese adolescents to up their vitamin D intake to 4,000 IUs.

While the body is able to store vitamin D from the sunny summer months, other foods sources include cheese, mackerel, sardines, salmon and fish liver oil.

MAKING A DIFFERENCE: Rhonda Byers and Dale Smith

With a combined 15 years, Rhonda Byers and Dale Smith of MU Student and Auxiliary Services have shown their support for the CARE Program and dedication to its youth participants.

Since 1982, the city of Columbia's Career Awareness Related Experience program has served Columbia's youths ages 14 to 18 in many important ways. Participants, called "CARE trainees," develop basic work skills, which help them build a good work ethic for future opportunities.

Local employers provide jobs for CARE youths in a variety of environments such as office, retail, salon, art studio, day care, academic and outdoor labor. Trainees work 20 hours per week and earn minimum wage during the eight-week summer program while receiving employment support and coaching from an assigned job coach. Job coaches help set individual goals for youths to ensure success at the job site and to help prepare them for future job expectations.

Rhonda, Student & Auxiliary Services human resources manager, has organized training and placed CARE youths at the SAS warehouse offices and with the custodial team. Dale is the supervisor in charge of the young men and women Rhonda recruits to perform custodial duties. He understands the mission of CARE and the benefits of investing in young adults because, years ago, he was a CARE "kid."

When asking Dale about what makes him successful in connecting with students from the CARE Program, you can see the reflection in his eyes as he smiles and quietly says, "It's how I got my start, and I've been here ever since." It was at his suggestion about five years ago that SAS renewed its voluntary participation in the CARE Program. Rhonda contacted CARE's director and found both employers shared a common mission in supporting student learning through creating educational work environments.

As part of its mission to support student learning, as well as promote strong relationships with the Columbia community, SAS participates in CARE to help place its students in employment opportunities throughout SAS. SAS is a self-supporting auxiliary within the Division of Student Affairs at the University of Missouri. The unit is composed of the Missouri Student Unions — Memorial Union and the MU Student Center — MU Student Parent Center, MU Bookstores and MU General Stores.

As an 18-year-old, Dale, now in his 40s and a building manager for the Missouri Student Unions, participated in the CARE Program, and his first job was at Memorial Union. After working part time as a CARE trainee, he was offered independent employment with SAS, building a career with the Missouri Student Unions. The CARE Program was a significant turning point in Dale's

life, and he felt it was important that SAS participate. He is able to use his own experiences in mentoring and encouraging the students he supervises.

Rhonda takes the time to meet the CARE students and learn something about each one. "I love talking with the students to find out what their interests and goals are. I want them to take pride in their school and work and do what I can to encourage their success. By working with us, they get to observe and most of the time interact with other students who have or are making the transition beyond high school. In some sense, I hope that makes them more confident about their own transitions. I appreciate that CARE takes the time at the end of each summer to celebrate the students' accomplishments. It's very special, very heartwarming."

Both Rhonda and Dale have raised children of their own and experienced parenthood as it relates to young adults. Rhonda has three children, with the youngest graduating high school a couple of years ago. Dale has six daughters, all out of high school, with his youngest now 19. Rhonda and Dale find their own way of relaxing outside of work, with Rhonda watching sports and Dale tinkering with cars and small engines. Practicing faith also is important to each. Rhonda is Baptist, and Dale is Methodist.

At the end of each CARE student's time with SAS, Rhonda and Dale hope they have positively influenced the students, that the students have learned to relate learning in the classroom to being successful in the workplace and that they understand we all have to overcome challenges at some point in our lives.

Rhonda Byers contributed to this article.

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Iraq veteran travels abroad with help of MU

The U.S. Department of Veteran Affairs, Veterans United Home Loans and Trulaske College of Business helped to finance the trip.

By Julie Larsen

Published Dec. 6, 2011

Army veteran Robert Canine received the chance to study abroad with the help of the Trulaske College of Business and Veterans United Home Loans two years after he was injured in Iraq.

Canine, now a sophomore at MU, had both of his legs amputated below the knee when an explosive hit his vehicle while returning from patrol in Iraq. With the help of prosthetic legs, Canine is able to walk.

He approached Stephen Ferris, the trip's organizer and a professor of finance in the Trulaske College of Business to see if it was possible for him to participate in the trip to Germany and the Netherlands from Dec. 28 to Jan. 11.

"I had to check to see how strenuous the activities during the trip would be," Canine said. "I didn't know how much walking we would do or if we would be walking through factories. I can walk, but I can only walk for so far and only for 12 to 16 hours."

Ferris, a 23-year Navy veteran himself, was eager for Canine to try to go on the trip.

"(Canine) saw the program was available and approached me to ask if it was possible for him to go on the trip," Ferris said. "I told him it was possible and that he should apply. There would be a cost to it and adjustments to go abroad with his situation, but it was possible."

Canine said he wanted to go on the trip to see how different countries ran business. Because the trip is only two weeks long, Canine said it will not put a large strain on his family.

"Since I am in the business college I will be able to witness a world economy," Canine said. "It is a great time to go with the economic crisis in Europe, and since we live in a global economy, what happens in Europe also happens in the United States."

The U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs paid for Canine's tuition abroad. That still left the roadblock of \$4,000 to cover lodging, airfare and food.

"I went back to talk to Professor Ferris and told him that at this point it was a no (to go on the trip)," Canine said. "I did not have \$4,000 that I could just spend on a trip. (Ferris) then told me that he would try to find a way for me to go. That is when he went to the Veterans United Home Loans in Columbia, and I got an email from professor Ferris telling me that he found me a sponsor."

With the help of the faculty at the Trulaske College of Business, Canine received \$3,000 from the Columbia-based Veterans United Home Loans and also received \$750 from the Study Abroad office at the Business school.

For Ferris, the determination to help Canine comes from a sincere level of respect for him and all he has sacrificed for the U.S.

"I am one of the few faculty members that are military, so I am sympathetic to those who are veterans," Ferris said. "I thought that he was a true hero for our country and an inspiration for our country. He wanted to go. He showed value in the program. He presented himself well, and he was ambitious."

Canine would also have a better chance to do well in the business world with study abroad experience, Ferris said.

"This opportunity allows him to go abroad and learn about international business, and that is going to make him a better candidate in the business world," Ferris said. "He has a tough transition to make to civilian life, and the university can help with that transition."

Ferris also said he believes Canine is an inspiration for other students who believe they can't study abroad because of personal circumstances.

"It was first an inspiration that he wanted to do (study abroad)," Ferris said. "His actions are going to be an inspiration to other students, and I think it is going to be apparent when he goes abroad, and he carries his own briefcase and walks through the snow and uses the subway. His actions are going to show how inspirational he is."