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Two MU startups get money through investment program

A company that will manufacture a compound used in semiconductors and rechargeable batteries and another that is creating a long-lasting collagen skin filler are expected to start operating in Columbia soon thanks to funding from a University of Missouri System investment program.

UM President Tim Wolfe announced the recipients of the inaugural Enterprise Investment Program funds this morning at the Life Science Business Incubator at Monsanto Place. He praised the fund, created in the midst of an economic downturn, as a symbol of the system's commitment to helping Missouri grow jobs.

HLB Horizons LLC will receive as much as \$400,000, and EternoGen will receive \$200,000 from the fund upon completion of certain milestones.

Mark Lee, an assistant professor of radiology and chemistry, is president of HLB Horizons. He and Fred Hawthorne, director of MU's International Institute for Nano and Molecular Medicine, developed a new way to create chemical compounds that create boron, which can be used in semiconductors and rechargeable batteries found in hybrid vehicles. The method, Lee said, is safer and more environmentally friendly than the current process, which involves explosive gas.

Lee's company will be the only one in the United States manufacturing these compounds. And because the method is simpler, he envisions being able to manufacture and sell larger supplies at cheaper costs.

Mike Nichols, vice president of research for the UM System, said he expects HLB Horizons to "create nothing short of a global renaissance."

HLB Horizons is expected to open this year and continue to expand here for the next three to four years. Other investors expressed interest in the company, but Lee said that would have likely meant the company would not have been in the United States and "certainly not in Mid-Missouri," he said. "We're swimming countercurrent."

EternoGen is a medical company led by Luis Jimenez, a graduate of the Crosby Master of Business Administration program who developed his product as part of an interdisciplinary student challenge in 2009. The company expects to use the material in a number of ways, but the first product is a collagen skin filler that is supposed to last longer than current products on the market.

It's a booming industry "as the baby boomers are longing to stay young and beautiful," Jimenez said. "And there's nothing wrong with that."

The awards come more than two years after former UM President Gary Forsee announced the EIP and pledged up to \$5 million over five years to companies that commercialize MU inventions. Last summer, UM General Counsel Steve Owens, serving as interim president at the time, slashed the fund by half in response to an unexpected cut in state funding.

The two awards were chosen from a pool of 16 applications. There's money set aside for another wave of investments, Wolfe said, and he encouraged those who did not get funded this time to try again. The application process opens March 1.

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Missouri entrepreneurs granted investments by UM System fund

By [Kate Moritz](#)

February 23, 2012 | 1:45 p.m. CST

COLUMBIA — UM System President Tim Wolfe spent his second Thursday morning on the job giving out \$600,000 to Missouri entrepreneurs.

Wolfe and Mike Nichols, UM System vice president for research and economic development, announced the 2012 Enterprise Investment Program winners to a small audience at 10 a.m. in the Life Science Business Incubator at Monsanto Place.

HLB Horizons LLC, a company that has developed a safer way to produce a potentially dangerous chemical compound used in rechargeable batteries, and EternoGen LLC, a new medical device company that has created a longer-lasting cosmetic skin filler, were announced as the first-ever recipients of the investment program's money.

"What's exciting about these two that we've picked is that one is led by a faculty member and one by a graduating MBA student," Wolfe said. "I'm sure that we're going to be reading about the success of his company and the success of him for many years to come."

The Enterprise Investment Program is a UM System fund set up to support high-tech startup companies established around technologies developed at a of UM's four campuses. The fund currently holds \$2.8 million, [according to its website](#). Entrepreneurs can apply for money from the program, and each selected applicant can receive up to \$500,000.

HLB Horizons will receive up to \$400,000 from the program. EternoGen will receive up to \$200,000, with an additional \$300,000 coming from two other investors.

"The competition was tough and intense," Wolfe said of the applicants. "It took about a year for us to evaluate the 16 proposals submitted. We looked at 16 outstanding business plans and selected two as the best."

According to the program's website, it aims to help startup businesses commercialize "University of Missouri-developed intellectual property," increase the company's capacity to attract other investors and create Missouri jobs.

Wolfe said the fund's first investments are a step in the right direction for the state's economy.

"It is a clear path toward creation of jobs; it drives the economy," Wolfe said. "We are in a race for jobs — this is a global race for jobs, and we are behind. This is our commitment to help the state of Missouri catch up."

Over the next five years, Wolfe said, the two companies will provide Missouri with 175 new jobs. HLB Horizons President Mark Lee, also an assistant professor of radiology and chemistry at MU, spoke excitedly about his company's opportunity to stay in Missouri. Most chemical companies these days are getting their start in China, he said.

"Without this investment, we might have been able to start the company, but we wouldn't have been able to keep it here in the state of Missouri or even in the United States," Lee said. "We're hoping to start small-scale production of the chemical compound this year and continue to expand the company in Missouri for the next three to four years."

The chemical compound, which contains boron, has been dangerous to manufacture in the past. However, Lee and his team has been able to develop an eco-friendly and safe way to produce the compound, used in rechargeable hybrid car batteries, for defense purposes and in high performance polymers. It also has potential medical applications. EternoGen CEO and recent MBA graduate Luis Jimenez, accompanied by his team, spoke about the benefits of the cosmetic skin filler the company developed. It is longer-lasting than the traditional collagen filler and can be used to diminish the appearance of scars and wrinkles, as well as having wound-healing and orthopedic reconstruction applications.

"This target market, the baby boomers, long to be young and beautiful," Jimenez said. "And I must say, there's nothing wrong with that." Jimenez, who has lived in Columbia for two years, was brought on as CEO of EternoGen at the same time he began his MBA coursework.

"I would like to invite more people to do that; it's a fun task," he said, laughing. MU Chancellor Brady Deaton closed the announcements by talking about how impressed he is with the program, the entrepreneurs and the UM System as a whole.

"You can't look at this enterprise without being terribly optimistic about the future," he said.

COLUMBIA MISSOURIAN

MU Chancellor Brady Deaton has personal stake in honorary degree from Thai university

By [Lauren Page](#)

February 23, 2012 | 5:21 p.m. CST

COLUMBIA — MU Chancellor Brady Deaton addressed the audience in the Thai language, then in English, after receiving an honorary doctorate degree in public affairs on Thursday from Khon Kaen University in Thailand.

Accompanied on stage by five representatives from Khon Kaen University, Deaton was recognized during a ceremony in Reynolds Alumni Center at MU for his career in public service, which began with a stint as a Peace Corps volunteer in Thailand.

“I feel deeply humbled to have the delegation from Khon Kaen University — a university we are very proud of here at the University of Missouri for the partnership that we have developed,” Deaton said during his speech.

Deaton’s relationship with the country dates to 1962, when he served a two-year tour as a Peace Corps volunteer in Nan, Thailand. He taught vocational agriculture in the Thai language.

“It was education that took me to Thailand and a commitment to developing an educational framework in Thailand in 1962,” Deaton said.

Deaton reflected on a visit to Khon Kaen University in 1963. “There was a vision for education,” he said. “They knew that education would lead to the future.”

He called MU’s ties to Khon Kaen University “a very profound historical partnership that we cannot back away from or we do so certainly at our own peril.”

A passion for education has been with Deaton since his volunteer work in Thailand. He has gone back from time to time to see the progress there.

“It is that power of education and that devotion to reason and to rising to a level where we can resolve our understanding of each other and our differences, so that we can make progress instead of impairing our ability to move forward,” Deaton said.

Deaton received an honorary degree from another Thai university, Prince of Songkla University in Hat Yai, in 2009.

In an interview after his speech, Deaton pointed out the similarities between MU and its partner in Thailand.

“It is very much a frontier university like the University of Missouri was,” he said. “They were put in the frontier of the nation to help develop the country and move it forward just as Missouri was.”

MU Faculty Council votes to tell Deaton to uphold tenure committee's decision in Engel case

By [Celia Ampel](#)

February 23, 2012 | 10:59 p.m. CST

COLUMBIA – MU's Faculty Council voted Thursday to send a letter to MU Chancellor Brady Deaton asking that he not send the case of suspended MU engineering professor Greg Engel back to the Campus Committee on Faculty Responsibility for another hearing.

Engel's case is the first to pass through the faculty responsibility committee since [the MU faculty bylaws](#) were written in 1974. So the Faculty Council finds itself discussing a part of the bylaws that hasn't seen light in almost four decades: What does this committee do, and what should be its standard for evidence?

The standard for evidence for the faculty responsibility committee is not defined in the bylaws. The omission [has brought up tricky questions about how difficult it should be to fire a tenured professor.](#)

The faculty responsibility committee found that charges of faculty irresponsibility against Engel did not stand up to a test of "clear and convincing" evidence that his case should move further in the tenure removal process.

"They acted in good faith, and their work should stand," said council member Leona Rubin, who led the discussion.

Deaton can decide to affirm, modify or reverse the faculty responsibility committee's decision or to send it back for a second hearing. If Deaton decides Engel's case should move forward in the dismissal process, it is no longer regulated by the MU faculty bylaws, but by the [University of Missouri System's academic tenure regulations.](#)

Weeks ago, Provost Brian Foster requested that Deaton send the charges back to the committee to be heard under a lower standard of a "preponderance of evidence." That standard requires only that evidence show accusations are more likely to be true than not.

"Our reputations are all we have," council member Gordon Christensen said at Thursday's meeting. He said he thinks anything that besmirches those reputations should have to hold up against a higher standard than "preponderance."

Putting off a decision

The faculty responsibility committee is part of a long process to revoke tenure, which is a guarantee that a professor who earns it will not be fired without just cause. It's possible for a complaint against a tenured professor to skip the faculty responsibility committee and move to a second committee, the Campus Faculty Committee on Tenure, which can recommend dismissal.

A hearing with the faculty responsibility committee was an opportunity for faculty members outside of Engel's department to hear his case.

Several tenured professors have been dismissed without going through the faculty responsibility committee, Rubin said.

No matter how rarely the committee has been used, Faculty Council Vice Chairman Joe Parcell said last week that he thinks it's important for the council to discuss the bylaws in the interest of future generations of faculty.

Some Faculty Council members said they were uncomfortable with making a move that might affect future cases.

"I do not want a precedent set in any way regarding our faculty responsibility committee — not by the provost, and not by us," Rubin said.

Before approving the letter to the chancellor, council members voted 10-9 to put off deciding on a resolution to define the standard for evidence in the bylaws. Rubin said the vote had to be the closest she has ever seen.

What is the committee's role?

Faculty Council members were hesitant to make any resolution, in part, because many of them did not feel sure they understood the faculty responsibility committee's role in the tenure removal process.

Members of the Faculty Council questioned if the faculty responsibility committee exists to advise Deaton on whether the case would provide the Campus Committee on Tenure with enough evidence to recommend a professor's dismissal. Members of the tenure committee, which has a defined standard for evidence, must be "convinced" that the evidence presented warrants dismissal.

University of Illinois law professor Matthew Finkin, author of "The Case for Tenure," said the purpose of the faculty responsibility committee is to advise the chancellor, which he attributes to the American Association of University Professors' standard process for faculty dismissal. MU, along with many four-year liberal arts colleges and universities, adheres to this process.

Therefore, Finkin said, it is logical that both committees would have to use the same standard of convincing evidence.

"You can't have two different standards; that would make no sense," Finkin said, adding that the standard for the faculty responsibility committee is rarely defined in campus bylaws.

But some faculty wondered if the faculty responsibility committee could have other roles.

Rubin said she feared the university would be too restricted if it was not able to consider evidence at a lower level. She said the "clear and convincing" standard should certainly be used for recommendation for dismissal, but that dismissal is in the purview of the tenure committee, not the faculty responsibility committee.

Clyde Bentley, an associate professor of journalism, asked whether the faculty responsibility committee was meant to have a vetting role or a judgment role, and no one gave a definitive response. Many council members said they didn't feel they understood the issue well enough to make a resolution to change the faculty bylaws.

"This legal-speak is unintelligible," said Craig Roberts, a professor of plant sciences, requesting that the council discuss more examples of how the faculty responsibility committee is used at other universities.



Tiger Town

Too exclusive

By Henry J. Waters III

Organizers of an expanded downtown football party zone have outlined a limited area along Locust Street for closure and vendor sales, alienating many downtown bar and restaurant owners who believe this arrangement will cost them business.

Their concern is well taken.

Organizers say Tiger Town is preliminary and still under discussion, but one wonders why they launched the idea with a plan so obviously wrongheaded for two reasons: Not only was it sure to foment the abovementioned opposition, but it fails to create the most visitor appeal.

I've suggested here before that Tiger Town street closures should include the entire downtown area so fun lovers can wander the whole area patronizing inside and outside vendor areas. On the back of my envelope, I'm sketching a Tiger Town zone including Fourth to Hitt streets and Walnut to Elm. If that would not constitute a great Tiger Town zone for hootin' and hollerin' on football game days, I'm George Washington.

Access into the area would be left for emergency vehicles and residents, but the essential means of transportation would be the shank's mare. Old-timers will recognize this reference to walking.

Downtown closure proponents should have known they should be inclusive rather than exclusive. In recent months we/they had the perfect example with the flap over the exclusive closure of North Ninth Street for Blue Note street concerts.

Visitors from Southeastern Conference cities are expected to consistently crowd Columbia in ways Big 8 or Big 12 fans never have. Give Tiger Town mongers great credit for looking ahead to give these outsiders, and faithful locals as well, a rip-roaring good time in Columbia. Starting from scratch, we have a chance to make our town the cream of the visitor fun crop, if we think big enough.

There is no good argument for thinking small. Police enforcement of on-street revelry will be no harder, perhaps easier, with all of downtown a pedestrian scrutinized area. What sense is there in conscientiously drawing out many or most of the very downtown bars and restaurants visitors will want to patronize?

Many other cities successfully close downtown streets, turning them to better use than through-traffic and on-street parking. On a football day, downtown Columbia can accommodate many more free-spending customers with an open indoor-outdoor pedestrian orientation.

The first order of business as planners and city officials develop their thinking about Tiger Town is to expand those borders so every downtown bar and restaurant can do the vending, not just a designated few.

HJW III

COLUMBIA MISSOURIAN

For Columbia, a model for community, student transit in Ames, Iowa

By Jacob Kirn

February 24, 2012 | 6:00 a.m. CST

AMES, Iowa — Most Iowa State University students climb aboard a red and yellow striped bus every day. Public transportation is ingrained into their routine in a way that would be expected in New York City, not a central Iowa town of approximately 60,000 population. Many, such as freshman Brian Llamas, have little to say about the bus system known as CyRide, except that it takes them where they want to go.

“I take the bus every morning to class,” Llamas said. “Everybody uses the buses here.” Llamas said there are so many people trying to board in the mornings that buses run directly behind each other.

“One fills up, and up comes the next one. It keeps going,” he said.

Columbia city officials organized a trip to Ames last Friday to see CyRide firsthand. Many of them, including Mayor Bob McDavid, already believe it is an exemplar for the city bus system in Columbia. In Ames, buses carry about 5.8 million riders, or 106 rides per capita, annually. The Columbia bus system carries 2.2 million riders annually, or 20 rides per capita. Buses in Ames run seven days a week, until past midnight every day but Sunday during the school year. They cover campus and the majority of the city. CyRide comes frequently; wait times average 10 to 20 minutes.

In Columbia, buses stop running shortly after business hours on three of five weekdays. There is no service on Sundays, and buses typically run about 40 minutes apart. What makes these systems so different? The answer: student fees. Each semester, students at Iowa State University pay a \$62.61 fee, which goes to CyRide and gives students a bus pass without further costs.

“There’s no way the bus system could operate and take you all over town without the collaboration between the university and the city,” Ames Mayor Ann Campbell said.

Nearly \$3.5 million of CyRide's \$8.2 million budget comes from student fees. Iowa State contributes an additional \$641,000, pushing the university's total contribution to about half of CyRide's budget.

City, university worked out differences

In the late 1970s, Ames had two fragmented bus systems: one run by the city, the other by Iowa State. Members of the university's Government of the Student Body studied their transportation needs and passed a referendum pledging student money to create a more unified bus system. The students approached the city, intent on creating an independent transit board to govern a new system. But Iowa State administrators balked. Campbell, who helped lead a citizen group that pushed for unified transit, said it was difficult to bring the two sides together.

"I can vividly remember sitting in those meetings, going to present to the university," she said. "I walked out saying: 'We're never going to see this transit system in Ames.' It was a territorial issue.

"But we were lucky with the student leadership we had at the time." Iowa State administrators eventually agreed to collaborate with the city, and the transit board that governs CyRide was created. It is made up of two Government of the Student Body representatives, a City Council member, the city manager, an Iowa State administrator and a mayoral appointee.

The two systems merged. The board aggregated revenue from the city, the university and student fees. It redrew routes and made a campus-centric route free to students. Passenger numbers exploded. From 1980 to 2001, passengers by year increased by more than nine times. Students approved an additional fee in 2001 that helped make all routes in Ames free to students. Ridership has increased by an additional 79 percent in the decade since.

"It's the best return on our dollar that we get from any club or organization that we give money to," said Dakota Hoben, president of the Government of the Student Body.

"We hear the fewest number of complaints (from CyRide) than from anything else," Hoben said. "CyRide makes it so students don't need a car." Warren Madden, Iowa State vice president of business and finance and a transit board trustee, said the university is pleased with the long-standing collaboration.

"We concluded it's better to have one bus system," Madden said. "It's economically advantageous and provides a higher level of services for both of us."

"(It has) reduced the investment we probably would've had to make in more parking structures," he said. About 11 percent of passengers are nonstudents, and they account for about 638,000 rides per year. Bob Anders, a personal banker at US Bank, serves on the transit board as the mayor's appointee. He takes a brown line and then a red line bus from his home north of campus to work during the week.

"My employer pays a portion of the monthly (bus) ticket," Anders said. "I'm very fortunate." Anders said he doesn't use the bus as much on weekends.

"For the most part, the nonstudent residents of Ames, with the exception of the ones that work at the university and ones that are low-income and disabled, are not as tuned in to the transit system as I think they could or should be." Anders said bus stops become more spread out as you get farther from campus and downtown.

"In the old part of the city, the red and green (lines) run fairly close together," he said. Up north, in a more affluent part of the community that has a lower density of homes, transit is not as prevalent, Anders said. "But if you're logical about this, you realize who's paying. The system is designed to go to locations that have high student populations."

Ames' paratransit system for people with disabilities is called Dial-A-Ride. It runs whenever city buses do. CyRide pays Story County about \$155,000 annually to provide the service, and residents pay \$2 per ride. Regular bus fare is \$1.25. **As Columbia officials, transit advisory commission members, MU student representatives and others rode a CyRide bus through the Iowa campus, it was clear many were impressed. Sixth Ward Councilwoman Barbara Hoppe said Iowa State's campus is comparable to MU's, making it a good model for what could be done in Columbia.**

"The amount of time it takes to walk across campus is about the same," Hoppe said. "But the students find the bus service very valuable in getting from class to class on time."

Columbia Transportation Supervisor Drew Brooks said he realizes how important it is to share information with the student body.

In Ames, "it was a student-driven effort. It sounds like it was a grass-roots effort," Brooks said. In Columbia, "there's been miscommunication and misinformation."

Anne Ahlvers, a member of the Tiger Transit Movement, a student organization formed to educate students about public transportation, said seeing a successful transit system in person encouraged her.

"It's not so elusive," she said. "It's something I feel we can attain." James Hatler, also a member of the Tiger Transit Movement, said he liked the Ames setup.

"The campus seems to be the hub of the system," he said. Columbia's "hub is over at Wabash Station, but most of the ridership in our system is around campus and to campus."

Falisha Humphrey, a representative of Solstice Transportation Group, the consulting firm hired by MU to assess students' transportation needs, also went on the Iowa trip. Solstice President Mitch Skyer said he hopes to deliver recommendations to MU by the end of the semester. McDavid said he has studied Ames' bus system for the past six months.

"The thing I hadn't seen or appreciated was the student satisfaction with this very comprehensive service," he said.

In an orange line bus, traveling through the heart of campus on Osborn Drive, Iowa State students touted CyRide. Lacie Heiserman, an elementary education major, said she takes the bus every day after class to the commuter parking lot near Jack Trice Stadium, where she gets her car and drives to her afternoon student teaching position.

Government of the Student Body treasurer Arjay Vander Velden said the late night bus "Midnight Express" is particularly successful. Vander Velden said the bus stops in front of Campustown, an area with student bars close to Greek houses, several times late at night on Fridays and Saturdays.

"It's played into the culture of the nightlife," he said. "People get dropped off or take a bus to Campustown so they can take the bus back. They don't have to worry about taking a cab or anything."

Megan Traxel, a junior studying kinesiology, said everyone learns how to use the buses in their own way.

"Once you get past the first time where you screw up, you figure out how it works pretty quick," she said. Without pausing or breaking eye contact, Traxel stood up.

"This is my stop," she said.