Mizzou student enrollment sets record, tops 34,000

COLUMBIA, Mo. -- The first day of classes at the University of Missouri's campus in Columbia saw yet another all-time high for student enrollment.

More than 34,000 undergraduate and graduate students were enrolled on Monday, up nearly 1,000 from the first day of fall classes last year. That's been a steady pattern at Missouri for most of the past decade.

Unofficial first-day numbers show that Missouri's total minority student population stands at 4,940, a 10.3 percent gain. Minority enrollment among first-year students increased by nearly 15 percent.

Nearly 27,000 of the students on the Columbia campus are undergraduates.
The University of Missouri-Columbia has ridden strong out-of-state recruiting efforts to push its fall enrollment to a new record.

The numbers won't be official for a few weeks, but 34,255 students were enrolled as of Monday, up 2.8 percent from 33,318 students in the fall of 2011.

Mizzou, like every school in the state, is battling against a demographic trend in which high school graduating classes are getting smaller.
The shift, which started last year, is largely attributed to the youngest children of post-World War II baby boomers finally making their way through high school. It's a population bubble that fueled a 36 percent increase in high school graduates nationwide from 1994 to 2008.

While most states, including Illinois, peaked a few years ago, Missouri has just started a downward trend that's expected to last until at least 2015. And even then, the numbers aren't expected to recover for a long time.

"It'll go up and down a little bit, but it will never be like it was in 2010, at least not for 10 years," said Ann Korschgen, vice provost for enrollment management Mizzou.

The preliminary enrollment numbers show the school, thus far, is holding steady with in-state enrollment, losing only 33 students compared with last year. But in the lucrative pool of nonresidents (they often pay double the in-state rate), the school saw an 11.6 percent increase, representing an additional 970 students.

Most come from Illinois, Texas, Minnesota and Colorado — states where the school concentrates its recruiting efforts.

Elsewhere, the University of Missouri-St. Louis said its first-day enrollment was down slightly, at 12,009 versus 12,180 last year. But spokesman Bob Samples said the early numbers at the commuter campus could fluctuate considerably during the first two weeks of the semester.

Still, he said, the slippage appears to be related to the economy's improvement. Freshman enrollment is up slightly, but graduate enrollment has dropped more than 6 percent, to 2,789 this year from 2,991 last year.

Graduate enrollment, which has been on the rise since 2008, typically improves when a bad economy pushes people toward new careers and skills. Now that trend is starting to reverse.

"As the economy improves, some students are backing off graduate school," Samples said.

By the time dual-credit enrollments are factored in, the school expects total enrollment to be about even with last year's 16,800.

At Missouri State University in Springfield, officials announced a half-percent increase in first-day enrollment to 18,826 students. The school said enrollment had increased in all but two of the last 16 years.

Southern Illinois University Edwardsville wouldn't reveal its first day numbers, but officials said they were hopeful about topping the 14,000 mark for the third consecutive year.

Southern Illinois University Carbondale also declined to offer its first-day enrollment numbers, noting that it would wait until the 10th day of the semester before releasing that information, when it becomes official.
Enrollment rises past 34,000
Students find ways to meet growing cost.

By Janese Silvey

Monday, August 20, 2012

Even though she took advantage of Missouri’s A+ scholarship program — which snagged her two free years at Moberly Area Community College — Brittany Rohrer started classes at the University of Missouri today already saddled with $11,000 in debt.

She expects that number to increase as she pursues a diagnostic medical ultrasound degree. It’s not a career she has been dreaming about since childhood, but Rohrer, 22, is a realist.

"The average pay is $64,000 or $65,000," she said. "And there are a lot of jobs out there. So it's more about practicality."

She expects to spend the semester working and borrowing from her dad to take 12 credit hours at $269.40 a pop, pay other mandatory student fees, and buy groceries and the occasional Tiger football tickets. She and her fiance also are saving up for a wedding ceremony. Today, though, Rohrer had more immediate worries than finances, mainly an 8 a.m. chemistry class.

There are 34,254 other MU students headed to classes today in hopes that tuition dollars someday lead to paychecks. Total enrollment is up 2.8 percent over last year's first-day count.

And even though they pay the most, the largest increase is coming from out-of-state freshmen, a population that grew 24 percent over last year. Nonresident tuition is $739.70 a credit hour.

"We’re thrilled with our numbers," said Ann Korschgen, vice provost of enrollment management. "We’re thrilled so many students want to come to Mizzou for their educational experience. It’s exactly the enrollment profile we wanted."

MU has recruiters working in Chicago, Dallas, Denver and Minneapolis, but Korschgen also credits other out-of-state students for talking about MU when they go back home.

National attention to MU’s move to the Southeastern Conference might have sparked interest, too. "It certainly didn't hurt that our brand was out there in the national news," she said.
Korschgen said MU is conscious of costs and said the average debt load for graduates is between $14,000 and $22,000. Administrators historically have used a portion of tuition increases to increase financial aid.

"We really try to support our students financially," she said. "I think Mizzou has its act together in terms of supporting its students and ensuring their success, and it shows in the enrollment."

Students on campus this morning cited a number of ways they're trying to keep debt down. Many are relying on parents, but they're also pinching pennies and resisting the urge to take out credit cards. About the latter, "we've heard the horror stories," said Margaret Schneider, a sophomore from South Carolina.

Schneider has a few loans but found a way to significantly cut her tuition bill — she applied for and received Missouri residency this summer.

Katie Holthouse so far has managed to avoid student loans with help from her family — it doesn't hurt that her stepmom works at MBS Textbooks and was able to help her borrow some books for free. Holthouse also works part time while she pursues a degree in clinical psychology. The sophomore said she learned last year that college is a balancing act.

"Good grades, social life, sleep," she said. "You can't expect all three."
COLUMBIA MISSOURIAN

Record number of MU freshmen prompt more temporary housing

(NOTE: Headline in print version was “Lots of freshmen, not enough rooms”)

By Lizzie Johnson
August 20, 2012 | 9:31 p.m. CDT

COLUMBIA — A lack of MU residence hall spaces has left freshmen sleeping in study rooms, rooming with student staff members and living in off-campus accommodations.

The temporary living situations are due to a record-breaking number of incoming freshmen. This fall, 6,560 freshmen enrolled at MU, up from 6,168 in fall 2011. First-year enrollment has been steadily increasing for years — by more than 1,500 since 2007.

"The fact that we are having more and more freshmen is something we need to get used to," said Frankie Minor, director of MU Residential Life. "We are also seeing a lot of freshmen coming from out of state."

To accommodate the increasing number of freshmen, extended campus housing has been expanded and temporary housing created.

This year, the number of beds at Tiger Diggs south of campus was increased from 335 in fall 2011 to 436 this year. Study rooms in the Hudson and Gillett halls have been temporarily converted into rooms and student staff members paired with a freshman as roommates.

The number of students in temporary housing has edged up from fewer than 25 in fall 2011 to 80 this year, paralleling the increase in enrollment. The students will remain in temporary housing for two weeks to three months until cancellations are finalized.

Taylor Rand, a freshman rooming with a student staff member in McDavid Hall, said the situation was understandable.
"It's not too frustrating," Rand said. "I understand the freshmen overload that they have, not having enough rooms. I just hope it's not permanent."

While all freshmen that met the May 15 housing deadline received a spot in a residence hall, those who registered after the date were not guaranteed a room. About 200 freshmen missed the deadline. Of those, 100 received accommodations.

"We don't ever want to have to turn a student away, particularly an incoming freshman. ..." Minor said. "It's disappointing in the sense that I would love to have as many of those students on campus as best we can."

Minor said an idea under consideration would eliminate a spring deadline and issue contracts on a first-come, first-served basis.

Supervising editor is Elizabeth Brixey.
COLUMBIA MISSOURIAN

Group to celebrate University of Missouri Press on Tuesday

By Christine Cauthen
August 20, 2012 | 6:49 p.m. CDT

COLUMBIA — **A rally to celebrate the University of Missouri Press will be held at 2 p.m. Tuesday in Jesse Wrench Auditorium in Memorial Union South.**

"It's going to be a big celebration, not a funeral and not a huge protest movement," said Lois Huneycutt, an associate professor of history at MU who helped organize the event.

The program will include authors' readings, a question-and-answer session and recognition of the 10 press employees likely to lose their jobs. One employee already has.

Since May, when University of Missouri System President Tim Wolfe announced the press would lose its funding, there has been a wave of backlash.

In July, MU officials announced the press would continue in digital form.

In early August, Wolfe and MU Chancellor Brady Deaton met with members of the MU Faculty Council to discuss the council's resolution to ensure the press' quality after the transition.

Tuesday's event will focus on the good things the traditional UM Press did for its authors, Huneycutt said. Authors published by the press will read excerpts from their books and talk about what the closure means for them.

"We have invited the publishers, students and the administration," she said.

Huneycutt emphasized that one focus is to inform members of the MU Faculty Council before they vote on the resolution of the press Thursday.

"The largest loss is that this is the major platform for storytelling for Missouri," Huneycutt said. She said she thinks it's an important podium for the art, politics, history, ecology and economy of Missouri.
"Readers in the next 50 years will suffer without a centralized place to have a market and interest for the work," she said.

Attendees can expect to learn about the significance of the program from people who have been involved with it over the years and to learn what kind of activism they can take to oppose the closure.

Some people believe that a publishing platform isn't the only thing at risk.

"If the faculty don't exercise their power and put up a very strong fight then I feel that they're going to lose their power," said Stephen Montgomery-Smith, a mathematics professor at MU who plans to attend the event.

*Montgomery-Smith, who has publicly criticized the decision to close the press, said that he thinks it is symbolic of the other functions of the university and that to lose it is to sacrifice the long-term goals of promoting knowledge and learning.

*Supervising editor is Elizabeth Brixy, *
MU student dies after Wisconsin crash

By Janese Silvey

Published August 20, 2012 at 9:02 a.m. Updated August 20, 2012 at 2 p.m.

A University of Missouri student died Saturday from injuries he suffered in a crash last week in northern Wisconsin.

Timothy "Kelly" Needham, 21, from Peoria, Ill., would have started his senior year today at MU, where he was studying business finance.

"It's difficult," said Diane Dahlmann, director of recreation services and facilities, where Needham worked as an event specialist and participated in Team Mizzou, a student development and employment program in the department.

"Kelly was somebody who was really a great member of Team Mizzou," Dahlmann said. "He had a number of roles with us, and we will certainly miss him in those capacities, but also because he had such a big heart and a great big personality. He just had a particular joy about life and about his work here at Mizzou Rec."

Police in Minocqua, Wis., responded last Monday to the two-car crash that also killed a 50-year-old Wisconsin man. Needham was a passenger in a vehicle driven by John Pearl, 21, also of Peoria.

Kelly graduated from Peoria Notre Dame High School in 2009. At MU, he was on the dean's list and was a member of Delta Tau Delta fraternity.
"Kelly lived his life to the fullest and wore a smile for everyone he met," his obituary said. A funeral Mass is set for Thursday in Peoria.

The MU Recreation Center hosted about 400 returning students during a back-to-school rally yesterday, where attendees took a moment to remember Needham. The "M" flag over Brewer Fieldhouse also was lowered to half-staff in his memory, and Dahlmann said her department is considering naming a Team Mizzou award in his honor.

Needham will be remembered for "his great regard and respect for his relationships," Dahlmann said, "his relationships with his Delt brothers, with his Team Mizzou family and the greater Mizzou community."
MU police seek man who struck woman's face

By Naif Bartlett
August 20, 2012 | 4:07 p.m. CDT

COLUMBIA — The MU Police Department is seeking a suspect in connection with an assault that occurred at about 11:30 p.m. Sunday.

A female victim was struck on the left side of her cheek by one of three men walking toward her on Rollins Street, according to a Police Department news release. The man struck her after making a derogatory comment, and the three men continued to walk eastbound on Rollins Street after the incident, the release said.

Police are asking anyone with information to call Crime Stoppers at 875-8477.

Supervising editor is Jacob Kirn
Spirituality Correlates to Better Mental Health Regardless of Religion, Say Researchers

ScienceDaily (Aug. 20, 2012) — Despite differences in rituals and beliefs among the world's major religions, spirituality often enhances health regardless of a person's faith, according to University of Missouri researchers. The MU researchers believe that health care providers could take advantage of this correlation between health -- particularly mental health -- and spirituality by tailoring treatments and rehabilitation programs to accommodate an individual's spiritual inclinations.

"In many ways, the results of our study support the idea that spirituality functions as a personality trait," said Dan Cohen, assistant teaching professor of religious studies at MU and one of the co-authors of the study. "With increased spirituality people reduce their sense of self and feel a greater sense of oneness and connectedness with the rest of the universe. What was interesting was that frequency of participation in religious activities or the perceived degree of congregational support was not found to be significant in the relationships between personality, spirituality, religion and health."

The MU study used the results of three surveys to determine if correlations existed among participants' self-reported mental and physical health, personality factors, and spirituality in Buddhists, Muslims, Jews, Catholics and Protestants. Across all five faiths, a greater degree of spirituality was related to better mental health, specifically lower levels of neuroticism and greater extraversion. Forgiveness was the only spiritual trait predictive of mental health after personality variables were considered.

"Our prior research shows that the mental health of people recovering from different medical conditions, such as cancer, stroke, spinal cord injury and traumatic brain injury, appears to be related significantly to positive spiritual beliefs and especially congregational support and spiritual interventions," said Cohen. "Spiritual beliefs may be a coping device to help individuals deal emotionally with stress."

Cohen believes spirituality may help people's mental health by reducing their self-centeredness and developing their sense of belonging to a larger whole. Many different faith traditions encourage spirituality though they use different names for the process. A Christian monk
wouldn't say he had attained Nirvana, nor would a Buddhist monk say he had communed with Jesus Christ, but they may well be referring to similar phenomena.

"Health workers may also benefit from learning how to minimize the negative side of a patient's spirituality, which may manifest itself in the tendency to view misfortune as a divine curse." As the authors note, spiritual interventions such as religious-based counseling, meditation, and forgiveness protocols may enhance spiritually-based beliefs, practices, and coping strategies in positive ways.

The benefits of a more spiritual personality may go beyond an individual's mental health. Cohen believes that the selflessness that comes with spirituality enhances characteristics that are important for fostering a global society based on the virtues of peace and cooperation. The paper, "Relationships among Spirituality, Religious Practices, Personality Factors, and Health for Five Different Faiths" was published in the *Journal of Religion and Health*. The lead author was Brick Johnstone of the MU Department of Health Psychology. The paper's other authors were Dong Yoon of the MU School of Social Work, Laura Schopp of the MU Department of Health Psychology, Guy McCormack now at Samuel Merritt University, Marian L. Smith now of Via Cristi Hospital, and James Campbell of the MU School of Medicine.
Colleges turn to donors for cash

As state funding drops, more public universities are stepping up their fundraising campaigns.

By MARÁ ROSE WILLIAMS

Getting tired of the old alma mater putting the touch on you for its latest megamillion-dollar fundraising campaign?

Does it seem like the phone calls and letters that used to pop up once in a while are now just streaming in?

Welcome to the never-ending public university fundraising campaign.

As states have tightened the taps on higher-education funding, public colleges and universities are acting more like private schools when it comes to raising money — they’re always in campaign mode. And the financial goals keep rising.

“Public institutions as a whole came to fundraising late,” said Rae Goldsmith, vice president for advancement with the Washington-based Council for Advancement and Support of Education.

But they’ve come to it in a big way.

“The perception definitely is that they go from one campaign into another,” Goldsmith said. “There is a sort of ongoing fundraising happening.”

It’s happening at the University of Missouri, the University of Kansas, Kansas State University and other large state schools across the country.

Consider MU, which from 2000 to 2008 ran an aggressive $1 billion campaign, For All We Call Mizzou. When it ended, just as the recession rushed in, the university’s Central Development Office took a little time to evaluate that campaign and began planning the next one. Now the MU fundraisers are in what’s known as the silent or quiet phase of a billion-dollar-plus campaign, and they’re poised to launch the effort publicly. That phase could last four more years.

By then, MU fundraisers say, the university probably will have identified a whole new set of needs and be ready to gear up for the next drive.
That type of fundraising is just what public schools’ private counterparts have done since they were founded. Lacking state funding, private colleges and universities have always relied on the generosity of donors and large endowments.

As state funding for public universities has eroded, it was only natural for public schools to ask more of donors. Now more of the public schools are rivaling the top privates in fundraising.

In 1971, only three of the nation’s public schools were on the top 20 fundraising list produced by the Council for Aid to Education. By 1991, there were seven public schools.

Last year, 11 of the top 20 were public schools, although the top four were elite private schools Stanford, Harvard, Yale and the Massachusetts Institute of Technology.

Overall, the council said, public and private universities last year raised $30.3 billion.

Getting in the game

K-State’s fundraising history began in 1944 with a $15,000 campaign. Its second campaign didn’t start until 15 years later.

Things move a little faster now.

The university’s most recent campaign raised more than $500 million before it ended a few years ago. Planning for the next one is almost finished, and its silent phase will start soon, said Fred Cholick, who directs the Kansas State University Foundation.

The University of Missouri-Kansas City didn’t even have its own fundraising arm until three years ago. For the most part, it relied on receiving a slice of the campaign money raised by the University of Missouri system.

When UMKC established its own foundation in 2009, it immediately began a quiet campaign, calling on city philanthropists for support. Huge donations began to pour in. During 2011 and 2012, six gifts to UMKC were $1 million or more. The largest single gift in the school’s history, $32 million, came from Henry and Marion Bloch.

UMKC has raised half of its campaign goal of $250 million. Much of it was raised in the last year, when the school set an all-time fundraising mark. It’s about to move into the public phase of the campaign.

University foundations like to wait to trumpet a campaign until they’re halfway to their goal. Start with the donors with deep pockets, and then turn to the average alums. They’ve found that people would rather help put a campaign over the top than give early to one that might fall short of its mark.

Another reason campaigns are starting to run together: They work. It’s easier to get people to give to a defined campaign, with a name and a goal, than to ask them to just write a check to the university.

“As a mechanism for getting funding, campaigns are the most effective,” Goldsmith said. “Some will say they will raise 20 to 50 percent more during a fundraising campaign year.”
But just because an official campaign hasn’t been announced doesn’t mean university fundraisers have taken a break on tapping big donors for dollars — that’s a 24-7, 365-days-a-year effort, said Dale Seuferling, who leads fundraising efforts for the KU Endowment. He said the schools are always meeting, greeting and eagerly receiving donors.

Seuferling said it has taken decades for public institutions to master a donor-friendly fundraising culture.

“It takes a constant effort to instill that every faculty member, every staff member, every student needs to participate in the relationship-building environment,” he said.

KU ended its KU First campaign in 2004 and began its Far Above campaign in 2008. That $1.2 billion campaign went into its public phase this year. Each year so far the university has hit a higher dollar mark — raising $94 million in 2008, $106 million in 2009, $122 million in 2010 and $153 million in 2011.

The campaign is set to conclude in 2016.

“Fundraising at public universities, let’s say 20, 30 years ago, was icing on the cake,” Seuferling said. “Today the reality is that fundraising contributes more and more of the ingredients for the cake.”

‘Publicly assisted’

Even with so much money being raised by public schools, those leading the drives say it is a misconception that private dollars offset the loss in public funding.

“You can’t replace dollars lost with dollars raised,” Goldsmith said.

Public funding goes to operate the university. Most of the money raised during a campaign is restricted by the donors and directed toward their passions — a new engineering department building, scholarships for outstanding nursing students and so on.

“Donors are not interested in keeping the lights on or in paying faculty salaries,” said Linda L’Hote, associate vice chancellor for development at MU. “The state is still a major player in funding public institutions.”

However, in states where higher-education funding has been severely cut, some schools have discussed whether getting so much less money from taxpayers makes them more private than public.

Goldsmith said she’s heard a few East Coast public universities refer to themselves as “publicly assisted institutions” because their public support is so low.

Cholick said that while publics may look more like the privates when it comes to fundraising, the big difference between the two is “accessibility, which is linked to affordability, which is linked to scholarships, which is linked to fundraising efforts.”

Murray Blackwelder, president of UMKC’s young foundation, led his first campaign in 1977 at another school. The school raised $1 million.

“I thought then, ‘My God, where do we go from here?’” Blackwelder said. Thirty years later, at a different school, he led a fundraising campaign that raised $1 billion.
Does he see any kind of cap ahead for college fundraising? Not really.

“It is going to continue,” Blackwelder said, “and it is going to get bigger and bigger.”
COLUMBIA MISSOURIAN

ANALYSIS: New studies weigh college value and cost

NO MU Mention

By JUSTIN POPE/The Associated Press
August 20, 2012 | 5:56 p.m. CDT

Two new studies offer emphatic answers to much-discussed questions about higher education: Yes, a college degree is worth it, but yes, it's the middle class that's getting particularly squeezed with student debt in the pursuit of one.

Both studies make persuasive cases, though each could be misunderstood without important context.

The first, released last week by the Lumina Foundation and Georgetown University's Center on Education and the Workforce, seems to thoroughly demolish the idea that the Great Recession diminished the value of a college degree. Yes, recent college grads have struggled more than usual to find jobs matching their training. But overall, even as unemployment was rising past 10 percent, the authors found the economy actually added 200,000 jobs for workers with a bachelor's degree. Since the recovery began, it's created 2 million more.

Just as there wasn't really a recession, at least in terms of job creation, for those with college degrees, there hasn't been a recovery for those without them. Nearly 6 million high-school-only jobs have been lost since the downturn began, and they are still declining even in the recovery.

That recovery may well never come if you have no college at all (though people with some college have done reasonably well of late).

"This is the clearest information that we have seen to date about the advantage of having college-level skills in the employment market," said Lumina's president and CEO Jamie Merisotis. "Since the recovery started two years ago we've seen a real acceleration. The gap between those with a college credential and those without one is growing."
The unemployment rate for all four-year graduates is 4.5 percent. For recent graduates, it's 6.8 percent. For recent graduates trying to work with only a high school diploma, it's nearly 24 percent.

In construction and manufacturing, which accounted for two-thirds of all Great Recession job losses, virtually all of the hiring during the recovery has targeted people with bachelor's or at least associate's degrees. Despite the hit those industries took, there are now about as many jobs in them as before the recession overall. But there are 15 percent fewer jobs for those with only high school in manufacturing, and 25 percent fewer in construction. Overall, the number of jobs for people with at least some college is growing at a healthy 4 percent annually. But the growth rate for high school-only jobs is zero and those jobs remain 10 percent below their pre-recession levels.

Still, there is another variable needed to answer the question, "Is college worth it?" That's the cost of college, and that has been rising rapidly. On average, the answer is pretty clear: A degree is worth it, to the tune of $1.3 million in additional lifetime earnings, a very good return on even an expensive degree. But, as Georgetown's Anthony Carnevale acknowledges, there's no such thing as a generic bachelor's degree. Where you study, and what you study, matter a lot.

"What people shouldn't take away from this is you can get any old BA or AA," Carnevale said. "They need to get past that. They need to think about which degree and what it will it do for them."

As many as one in five undergraduate degrees — for instance in counseling, at least for those who don't go on to get a master's — produce average earnings no greater than those of a high school graduate. Many types of AA degrees produce better average earnings than some bachelors. The research paints a powerful portrait of an economy where more education is better, but the kind of education matters too. The second study, being presented Monday at the American Sociological Association's annual meeting in Denver, highlights the particular burden of growing student debt on middle-class families, who may be too well off to qualify for financial aid like Pell Grants that target students from the poorest families.

In the study, University of Wisconsin demographer Jason Houle finds students from middle-income families rack up more student loan debt on average than others: not only students from high-income families — no surprise — but also than those from low-income families.
About 40 percent of students left school with debt, and the average was about $22,000. But students from families earning between $40,000 and $59,000 were saddled with $6,000 more on average than peers from families earning less than $40,000. Students from the next tier — family income between $60,000 and $99,000 — had $4,000 more in debt than their lowest-income peers.

One reason is that federal grant aid targets the lowest-income students — roughly 90 percent who receive Pell Grants come from families earning under $50,000. Lower-income students may be also be more debt-averse, causing those who go to college to choose cheaper schools.

But the figures reinforce the struggles of families just above the bottom level to afford even the average public four-year college, with tuition plus room and board (before factoring in financial aid) now running more than $17,000 per year.

"These kids, even though they have pursued the American dream, they're starting their careers with hugely unequal amounts of student loan debt," Houle said. "That could be the difference of a kid who can take an unpaid internship that would put their career on an upward trajectory."

The caveat with Houle's study is that he looked only at people who attended some college.

As Houle acknowledges, while those from low-income families who go to college may get out of school with less debt, poorer students are still less likely to go in the first place. If the Georgetown survey shows anything, it's that graduating with a moderate amount of student debt is still much better than not graduating.

So the lesson isn't necessarily that the lowest-income students are better off overall: Just 8 percent of those from families in the bottom income quartile (under about $36,000) have earned a bachelor's degree by age 24, compared to more than 82 percent from the top quartile (roughly $108,000).

But Houle's study does illustrate the serious bind of families above the very bottom (earning between roughly $36,000 and $65,000). Just 17 percent of those students earn a degree by 24, and they're racking up more debt in the process.
COLUMBIA MISSOURIAN

20 years of research lead to soy chicken strips that taste like, have texture of meat

By Margaret Ng
August 21, 2012 | 6:00 a.m. CDT

COLUMBIA — Harold Huff has more fun at work when he can make his own lunches using the chicken-free strips he produces in his lab at MU’s Agricultural Engineering Building.

“You can try chicken fajitas, chicken tacos and chicken salads,” said Huff, a senior research specialist at MU. “I certainly eat chicken fajitas more than anything else.”

Huff has been working for 20 years with MU biological engineering professor Fu-Hung Hsieh to create the alternative chicken product, which is made from a mixture of soy powder, carrot fiber, gluten-free flour and other ingredients.

Using a large extruding machine that transforms the mixture in only one minute, they can produce in one hour the same amount of "meat" that would come from 50 to 100 real chickens.

The technique of producing chicken-free strips that have the taste and texture of chicken was licensed by MU to Beyond Meat, founded by Ethan Brown, in 2009. Beyond Meat has been distributing the products through Whole Foods in northern California and Washington, D.C.

Consumer feedback has been positive, and the company plans to sell the chicken-free strips across America by 2015. Beyond Meat also expects to invest $5 million in a food production facility in Columbia this fall and employ more than 60 people here within five years.

Looking back over the past 20 years, Hsieh said serendipity drove him to do research on alternative chicken products.

“There was a product called textured vegetable protein in the ’70s,” Hsieh said. “TVP was made by extrusion of soy flour or soy concentrate under low moisture conditions. The beauty of TVP was it is protein-based and does not contain saturated fat.”
Textured vegetable protein's nutritional value made it a popular product in school lunch programs, hospitals and supermarkets during the 1970s. But it has drawbacks. The product must rehydrated, and flavor has to be added. Plus, it lacks the fibrous appearance of whole muscle. Hsieh said it left a lot of room for improvement.

The effort to produce veggie strips that tasted, looked and felt like real chicken was unsuccessful in the beginning. “We did not see true fiber formation in the first few years,” Hsieh said.

Off and on, the project ran slowly because of a lack of funding. “The ingredients are not expensive on a per-pound basis. But when we talk about hundreds and hundreds of pounds to run a trial, the large quantity caused them to become expensive,” Hsieh said.

That meant the researchers could only afford to pour small batches of ingredients into their $250,000 food extruder, which conveys, mixes and heats the concoction to produce the strips.

Huff and Hsieh were persistent though, constantly searching for the most favorable temperature, pressure and moisture levels for the mixture. A breakthrough came in the mid-’90s, when they began to see a fibrous texture that matched that of muscle tissue. That helped them get an $80,000 research grant from the Illinois-Missouri Biotechnology Consortium and $320,000 from the U.S. Department of Agriculture.

The soy-based mixture is powdery and has an off-white color. Soy powder is the main source of protein. The carrot fibers and the gluten-free flour help absorb water and promote fiber formation.

It took Huff and Hsieh years to get the proportions of the ingredients and the extrusion process exactly right.

“It was a bit rubbery in the beginning,” Hsieh said of earlier versions of the strips. Now, however, they look exactly liked cooked chicken breast meat. Pulling it apart, it is tender, stringy and moist. It’s OK to eat once it comes out of the extruder, but its taste is plain. That’s why they add a mixture of spices to give it flavor.

Hsieh, who was trained as a chemical engineer and food scientist in Taiwan and the United States, said he enjoys his research at MU.
“We have pleasant surprises from time to time in the laboratory,” Hsieh said. "Initially, we were not sure how long it would take us to make it happen. In addition, we had many other active research projects at the same time.

"Sometimes results are great, but sometime results are not as expected. But bad results are still useful because we learn a great deal from our mistakes, and we know what would not work."

Hsieh said there's always been a market for alternative meat products. “When you go to any supermarket's organic foods section, you could find veggie meat products from several suppliers. They are pricey. But you would be surprised how people are willing to pay for it.”

Indeed, the Global New Products Database reports that 110 new meat substitute products were introduced in 2010 and 2011. Huff noted that the chicken-free strips are not only a healthy vegetarian substitute for chicken, but they also help relieve the food scarcity pressure by supplying the world with another source of protein.

“Demand for protein increases with world population,” Huff said. "No one can say for sure: Would we still be able — 60 and 70 years from now — to have enough animals to meet the food demand of the entire population?"

Huff sees the alternative chicken strips as a way to ensure sufficient protein in people's diets. “The protein is never a replacement for meat, but, in my opinion, it helps lower the meat demand and provides us a nutrition base.”

Over the years, around 10 MU master's and doctoral students have helped with the research and published several academic papers related to the project. Justin Fuller, a master's student in biological engineering, has been part of the research for 2 1/2 years. He works in the lab from 7 a.m. to 5 p.m. every weekday to continue refining the product and the extruder's production rate.

“Different ingredients, different temperatures, different production rates — there are a lot of variables to investigate,” Fuller said.

Huff and Hsieh say they'll continue working on the chicken-free strips. “We are always looking for better blends,” Huff said, "and anything that would enhance the product's quality and functionality.”

*Supervising editor is Scott Swafford.*
COLUMBIA MISSOURIAN

FastCAT, Tiger Line give students options for transportation

By Sasu Siegelbaum
August 20, 2012 | 9:08 p.m. CDT

COLUMBIA — From an outsider’s perspective, the city’s new FastCAT bus route and MU’s Tiger Line shuttle service appear to be cats of different stripes. Despite their distinct roles, the two will see some overlap in routes and ridership.

*Tiger Line, which began operating in 1985, links the MU campus with several university parking lots and mostly serves MU students during the school year.* 
*Tiger Line is operated by MU Parking and Transportation Services and gets some of its funding from a fee of $16.85 per semester that all students pay, regardless of whether they use the shuttle service.*

Tiger Line is restricted to MU students, their relatives and friends, as well as MU faculty and staff. It operates along three bus routes, extending from Providence Road on the west to East Campus Drive on the east. One of the three takes students into the southwestern corner of downtown.

While Tiger Line’s cost is included in student fees, it exists primarily for student commuters with cars. The shuttle operates only while MU residence halls are open, and ends service at 1:30 a.m.

The new downtown-centered FastCAT will run year-round, with weekend hours extending to 2:30 a.m. It has the potential to serve the several thousand students who live in downtown apartments and on the campuses of MU, Stephens and Columbia colleges, as well as non-student residents of the central city.

FastCAT began operations last week.

Roger Harden of Columbia, who works at University Catering and Event Services, was one of only a few passengers around 9:30 a.m. Monday on the 40-seat, black-and-gold FastCAT bus as it moved from Eighth and Elm streets to University Hospital.
Harden had mostly praise for FastCAT and said he's glad the city is expanding its transportation options.

"They get just about anywhere in the city now," Harden said. "I've been here 10 years, and there wasn't much when I first came, and this is a big improvement."

Harden had some uncertainty about the consistency of FastCAT's off-peak and weekend services.

MU senior Lucinda Winter rode FastCAT for the first time Monday. She said she'd rather take the bus than drive to campus because it stops right at her front door. She said she'll consider using FastCAT at night and on the weekends to connect her with downtown.

FastCAT will remain free until Aug. 27. After that, it will cost $100 for a semester pass or $1.50 per ride. The FastCAT semester pass is equal to the price of a campus parking pass. In an effort to attract student riders, the city is offering semester passes for $62.50 when they're purchased in quantities of 20 or more. That's a deal that the owners of several apartment complexes have seized.

The Odle brothers, developers of the Brookside apartment complexes at College Avenue and Walnut Street and at Tenth and Locust streets, entered a contract with the city to buy $80,000 in passes for residents and pay $10,000 to advertise on FastCAT buses in each of the next five years.

Both FastCAT and Tiger Line intend to offer real-time mobile applications that will allow riders to track buses. FastCAT had hoped to launch its application by the end of last week, said Public Works Department spokesman Steven Sapp. However, the city is still working with AT&T to accomplish that. Tiger Line is still working to add GPS capability to its fleet.

On Monday afternoon, finding a seat on the Tiger Line shuttle, which is smaller than the city buses, was difficult. Joe Ahlbrandt, an MU senior majoring in engineering, was among the passengers who crowded onto the bus as it traveled the Reactor Field Loop. He said he's a satisfied customer.

"A mobile app would be nice, but wouldn't make a huge difference for commuting," he said.

Despite potential overlap in ridership, neither the city nor MU see the services as competitors.
"FastCAT is just another option for students," Sapp said. He added that the city also has hired a marketing specialist who will begin work next week and focus on driving up FastCAT passenger numbers.

Karlan Seville, spokeswoman for MU Campus Facilities, acknowledged the services are similar. Like the city, MU is trying to spread the word about the convenience of Tiger Line's service, she said.

"Our main goal is to provide a safe service to students and connect them with the campus."

_Supervising editor is Scott Swafford._
MU launches civility campaign

By Sky Chadde
August 20, 2012 | 6:21 p.m. CDT

COLUMBIA — A professor and co-founder of the Johns Hopkins Civility Project will give a free lecture about civility in the Internet age at MU on Wednesday.

The talk by P.M. Forni, author of "Choosing Civility: The Twenty-Five Rules of Considerate Conduct," is the first event in a campaign that will kick off Oct. 29 at the MizzouDiversity Summit, a conference held every two years that calls attention to diversity on campus.

The Show Me Respect campaign was created by the MU Equity Office to spread civility across campus.

"It's a grass-roots effort to really foster a much more civil environment for everyone," said Noor Azizan-Gardner, interim chief diversity officer of the Chancellor's Diversity Initiative and director of diversity programming and professional development at MU.

Noel English, the director of the MU Equity Office and the campaign's organizer, said she hopes all MU departments and student organizations become involved. Participating groups will work to implement their own, different activities and events in the spirit of the Show Me Respect campaign, Azizan-Gardner said.

Forni is seen as "the go-to guy" for civility, English said. He originally was only going to talk to university chairs at their annual retreat, but Chancellor's Diversity Initiative staff decided to piggyback on that lecture, making it available to everyone, English said.

After his lecture, "Life is a Relational Experience: Civility in the Age of Google," Forni will sign copies of his book.

Upcoming Show Me Respect events will be posted on the website, civility.missouri.edu.

Supervising editor is Elizabeth Brixey.
Akin fights to save GOP Senate bid

By JIM SALTER

ST. LOUIS -- Rep. Todd Akin fought to salvage his Senate campaign Monday, even as members of his own party turned against him and a key source of campaign funding was cut off in outrage over the Missouri congressman's comments that women are able to prevent pregnancies in cases of "legitimate rape."

Akin made no public appearances but went on former Republican presidential candidate Mike Huckabee's national radio show to apologize. He vowed to continue his bid for higher office.

"The good people of Missouri nominated me, and I'm not a quitter," Akin said. "To quote my old friend John Paul Jones, I have not yet begun to fight."

But Akin seemed to be losing political support by the hour as fellow Republicans urged him to abandon a race the party had long considered essential in their bid to regain control of the Senate. Incumbent Democrat Claire McCaskill is seen as vulnerable in public opinion polls and because she has been a close ally of President Barack Obama.

An official with the National Republican Senatorial Campaign Committee said the group's head, Texas Sen. John Cornyn, called Akin on Monday to tell him that the committee had withdrawn $5 million in advertising planned for the Missouri race. The official spoke to The Associated Press on condition of anonymity because the conversation was private.

Publicly, Cornyn called Akin's comments "indefensible" and suggested he take 24 hours to consider "what is best for him, his family, the Republican Party and the values that he cares about and has fought for."

Two other Republican senators -- Scott Brown of Massachusetts and Ron Johnson of Wisconsin -- urged Akin to step aside from the Senate race.

Brown, who is locked in a tight race with Democrat Elizabeth Warren, said Akin's comments were "outrageous, inappropriate and wrong."

Johnson called Akin's statements "reprehensible and inexcusable," and urged Akin to withdraw "so Missouri Republicans can put forth a candidate that can win in November."
Akin also got a swift rebuke from the campaign of presumptive GOP presidential nominee Mitt Romney and his running mate, Rep. Paul Ryan of Wisconsin.

Romney and Ryan “disagree with Mr. Akin’s statement, and a Romney-Ryan administration would not oppose abortion in instances of rape,” Romney spokeswoman Amanda Henneberg said.

“Like millions of other Americans, we found them to be offensive,” Romney said in an interview with National Review Online.

The furor began Sunday in an interview on KTVI-TV in St. Louis. Asked if he would support abortions for women who have been raped, Akin said: “It seems to me, first of all, from what I understand from doctors, that’s really rare. If it’s a legitimate rape, the female body has ways to try to shut that whole thing down.”

Later Sunday, Akin released a statement saying that he “misspoke.” But the fallout was swift and severe.

During the somber interview on Huckabee’s program, Akin apologized repeatedly, saying he made “serious mistakes” in his comments on KTVI.

“Rape is never legitimate. It’s an evil act. It’s committed by violent predators,” Akin said. “I used the wrong words the wrong way.” He later made a similar apology in an appearance on Sean Hannity’s radio show.

President Barack Obama said Akin’s comments underscore why politicians -- most of whom are men -- should not make health decisions on behalf of women.

“Rape is rape,” Obama said. And the idea of distinguishing among types of rape “doesn’t make sense to the American people and certainly doesn’t make sense to me.”

The American Congress of Obstetricians and Gynecologists said a woman who is raped “has no control over ovulation, fertilization or implantation of a fertilized egg. ... To suggest otherwise contradicts basic biological truths.”

Between 10,000 and 15,000 abortions occur each year nationwide among women whose pregnancies resulted from rape or incest. An unknown number of babies are born to rape victims, the group said.

Research on the prevalence of rape-related pregnancies is spotty. One estimate published in 1996 said about 5 percent of rapes result in pregnancy, or about 32,000 pregnancies among adult women each year.

McCaskill was ready to move on, saying Akin should not be forced out of the race.

“What’s startling to me is that (Republican) party bigwigs are coming down on him and saying that he needs to kick sand in the face of all the primary voters,” McCaskill said Monday at a campaign event in suburban St. Louis.

“I want Missourians to make a choice in this election based on policy, not backroom politics.”
The McCaskill campaign seemed to favor a matchup against Akin. McCaskill ran statewide TV ads during the primaries painting Akin as too conservative even for Missouri. She also ran ads against his GOP rivals.

The Akin ads served two purposes for McCaskill: boosting Akin among the more conservative Republican primary voters to help get him nominated and raising questions about him among moderates and liberals.

Akin won the state's Republican Senate primary just two weeks ago by a comfortable margin over millionaire businessman John Brunner and former state Treasurer Sarah Steelman. Many considered him a favorite to beat McCaskill in November.

Experts say the rape comments were a game-changer.

“He may in fact have mortally wounded himself,” said David Yepsen, director of the Paul Simon Public Policy Institute at Southern Illinois University in Carbondale. “This is a statement that is so crude and so offensive to more than half the electorate that there’s a real danger here the he has dealt himself out of this race.”

University of Missouri political scientist Peverill Squire said Akin’s comments could particularly hurt him among suburban voters, where Republicans have done well in recent elections and “where McCaskill really does need to pick up some votes to stay in office. This certainly gives her an opening.”

Ushering Akin from the race is complicated by the fact that he has never been a candidate beholden to the party establishment. Since being elected to Congress in 2000, Akin has relied on a grassroots network of supporters. His Senate campaign is being run by his son.

Missouri election law allows candidates to withdraw 11 weeks before Election Day. That means the deadline for the Nov. 6 election would be 5 p.m. Tuesday. Otherwise, a court order would be needed to remove a candidate’s name from the ballot.

If Akin were to leave, state law gives the Republican state committee two weeks to name a replacement. The candidate would be required to file within 28 days of Akin’s exit.

If Akin gets out, attention turns to Brunner and Steelman, but other possibilities include Missouri Auditor Tom Schweich, whom Republicans unsuccessfully tried to draft into the race earlier this year; former Sen. Jim Talent; and two members of Missouri’s House delegation, Blaine Luetkemeyer and Jo Ann Emerson.

Talent, who lost his seat to McCaskill in 2006, said he would not enter the race, The Washington Post reported.

Akin, a former state lawmaker who was first elected to the House in 2000, has a long-established base among evangelical Christians. He has been an outspoken abortion opponent, and his campaign website proudly points out that he is listed among Planned Parenthood’s “Toxic Ten” legislators.