MU graduate school dean takes Arizona post

Justice a key figure in changes to NSEI.

By Karyn Spory Tuesday, March 5, 2013 at 2:00 pm

After 11 years at the University of Missouri, the last three as vice provost for advanced studies and dean of the Graduate School, George Justice will be leaving for a job at Arizona State University.

Justice will leave his post at MU on June 1 to become dean for humanities in the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences at ASU. MU plans to conduct a national search for a permanent replacement.

"I think he's made some important contributions to MU, and I'm sorry to see him leave," MU Provost Brian Foster said. "I think he's one of those people who are going to be national leaders in higher education."

Those contributions have included Justice's work to expand a Peace Corps fellows program, start the Glimpse into Graduate School seminar program, reorganize the Graduate School and develop the MU Informatics Institute, an interdisciplinary doctoral program that unites six MU colleges and schools.

His tenure hasn't always been smooth sailing, though. Last March, Justice announced the campus's Nuclear Science and Engineering Institute would close. Over the past year, the administration has made efforts to move the program into the College of Engineering, with the institute's admissions and administration housed in a new nuclear engineering program.

In January, three professors from NSEI — Sudarshan Loyalka, Mark Prelas and Robert Tompson — cast a vote of no confidence in Justice and requested his removal from office. They cited a lack of transparency with faculty in planning for changes to NSEI, saying Justice's actions led to a "toxic and hostile work environment."

Prelas said he wishes Justice well on his move but noted that NSEI still has a lot of issues to resolve with MU administration.

Justice said NSEI and the vote of no confidence did not play a role in his decision to leave MU. "I've been looking at other opportunities for the past year," he said. "This was the first" offer "that really hit the sweet spot."
As an academic dean, Justice will be responsible for students and faculty members in several schools.

"ASU has had phenomenal growth in students and the amount of sponsored research," he said.

Justice said that although he has enjoyed his seven years working in MU's Graduate School — first as associate dean and in his current position — he is looking forward to developing a new skill set that involves making hiring and tenure decisions.

Replacing Justice will first involve an internal search for an interim dean. Foster said he hopes that can be done quickly so the interim dean can work beside Justice before his departure. A national search will be conducted for a permanent replacement. Foster said he hopes to have someone in place by summer 2014.

"George has been very forward-looking and effective in getting interdisciplinary programs running," Foster said. "He has provided great leadership, and it will be important to get someone who understands that."

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Posted in Education on Tuesday, March 5, 2013 2:00 pm.
Alert fails to mention that tornado warning was just a drill
Tuesday, March 5, 2013 at 3:45 pm

A statewide emergency drill Tuesday afternoon included a University of Missouri phone alert that didn’t indicate to recipients that its tornado warning announcement was only a test.

A simultaneous campus alert message via email clarified that it was a test message and that “there is no severe weather occurring at this time.” However, a recorded phone version of the alert gave no indication that the message was only a drill.

“The National Weather Service has issued a tornado warning for Boone County. Take cover immediately,” the automated message repeated to call recipients.

The situation occurred because of a glitch in the system that communicates National Weather Service alerts to the university's notification system, MU spokeswoman Mary Jo Banken said. The system scans the National Weather Service system for emergency notices, and when an alert is activated for Boone County, the message is sent out to MU Alert users via phone, email and text messages.

“We didn’t actually know that the National Weather Service was going to send an alert,” Banken said. “What happens is, our mass notification system picks that up as real. ... Obviously, we would want to get it out as fast as possible if there were a real tornado.”

The university posted a notice on the MU Alert website at 3:30 p.m. explaining the earlier phone messages.

“Had the university known that the national weather service was planning to activate their system today, we would have deleted our message and recorded a message that indicated that the message was a 'test only' message,” it said. “During the test last year, the national weather service did not activate their system since it was only a test and we assumed the same protocols would be followed this year.”

Tuesday’s tornado drill included the sounding of tornado sirens and weather radios statewide as an emergency awareness effort.

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False tornado warning sent by MU mass notification system

By Caroline Bauman
March 5, 2013 | 5:35 p.m. CST

COLUMBIA — MU sent out messages around 1:30 p.m. Tuesday that erroneously said there was a tornado warning in Boone County.

The university's mass notification system failed to recognize that the National Weather Service warning was a test, said Jim Kramper, warning coordination meteorologist with the service in St. Louis.

MU spokesman Christian Basi said the university was unaware that the National Weather Service would activate its system during the statewide drill scheduled for Tuesday.

The university has a contract with a mass notification system that automatically sends out tornado alerts, Basi said.

Once the National Weather Service activates its system for Boone County and the message is detected, phone, text and email messages are sent to all subscribers of the system.

"If we had known, we would have deleted our message and recorded one to say that it was only a test," Basi said.

An email sent out by the notification system stated the tornado warning was a test because it picked up the entire warning that the National Weather Service sent out, Basi said. The text and phone messages did not clarify because they were pre-recorded.

The National Weather Service sent out the same test warning last year, Kramper said.

"We filed the same procedures we always do when issuing a test warning," Kramper said. "A test has very similar code to a warning, but has a special line that indicates it is a test. These automated systems are not geared for these tests."
The weather service received calls about other automated systems in the state that also didn't distinguish it was a test, Kramper said.

The mass notification system has not changed from last year, said Division of Information Technology Director Terry Robb. He said he's unsure why the test triggered the system this year.

"I'm going to follow up with our mass notification vendor and make sure the weather service did not mistakenly send us the wrong code," Robb said. "This did not set off our system last year. So we had no reason to think it would this year."

Notifications are automatically sent to all faculty, staff and student email. Personal phone numbers and emails that are registered also received the message.
Students and States Near a 50-50 Split on the Cost of Public Higher Education

By Eric Kelderman

Public higher education is about to cross a historic threshold, in which students pay a higher percentage than do states of the operating costs of colleges.

Net tuition revenue made up 47 percent of public colleges’ educational costs in 2012, an increase of more than six percentage points from the previous year, according to an annual report from the State Higher Education Executive Officers.

In 1987, the report says, net tuition revenue accounted for just 23 percent of those costs. In 2001 tuition was a little more than a third of the costs.

Tuition has already amounted to more than half of the educational revenue in some individual systems, ranging from the University of California to the community colleges in Iowa and in South Carolina. But surpassing that threshold nationally is a gloomy milestone that reflects the deep state budget cuts that have hit public higher education since the beginning of the economic downturn and, at the same time, steady increases in enrollment.

Per-student spending on education from state and local sources fell to less than $5,900 in the 2012 fiscal year, a 9.1-percent decrease from 2011 and a quarter-century low for the third consecutive year.

Paul E. Lingenfelter, president of the executive-officers association, said the figures were unprecedented in his 40 years in higher education.

"Tuition revenues are up substantially due to higher prices and more enrollments, but not enough to offset losses of public funding," he said in a news release accompanying the report. "Students are paying more, while public institutions are receiving substantially less money to educate them."
The increasing costs to students have gotten significant attention, the report says, but rising tuition bills are not the fault of excessive spending. "Per-student spending in public institutions has been flat or declining since 2000. Recent tuition increases are driven primarily by the failure of public support to keep pace with enrollment growth and inflation," the report concludes.

The growing burden on students and the cuts in spending to educate them will undermine the nation's economic competitiveness, said Marshall A. Hill, chairman of the executive-officers association's executive committee and executive director of Nebraska's Coordinating Commission for Postsecondary Education.

"Other countries are rapidly improving the postsecondary education of their citizens," Mr. Hill was quoted as saying in the news release. "If the United States falls further behind in either quality or the number of students who enroll and graduate, it will not be easy to catch up."
COMMENTARY

MU gives Arkansas a welcome like a hog gets at the barbecue

March 6  By SAM MELLINGER  The Kansas City Star

COLUMBIA — Their coach took his jacket off and needed to be held back, lest he enter the personal space of the other coach, who was booed by a sellout crowd like he had spit on the living room carpet. Fans and even at least one former player took to social media to tell the world how they felt.

Missouri played its best basketball game of the season Tuesday, a 93-63 slapping of Arkansas that might be the school’s happiest moment so far in the Southeastern Conference. There’s nothing quite like stomping the school from the next state over, especially one you never thought much of anyway, and, well, let’s just get this out there:

With their beautiful mutual hatred of Kansas confined to message boards for the moment, the Tigers were down a good rival until Tuesday night.

When’s the last time you saw a college head coach have to be restrained from his counterpart in the middle of a game?

“Miscommunication,” Mizzou coach Frank Haith said. “I’m emotional. I was emotional for my team. I was encouraging my team, and I think he thought I was saying something else.”

Haith said he tried to explain that afterward to Anderson who, for his part, said he’d talk to Haith and continued to annoy Mizzou fans by doing everything but take full credit for the 52 wins and fan passion that’s filled the last two years here. Whatever. After it was all over, Laurence Bowers — the star of his own Senior Night with 24 points and 11 rebounds — said he didn’t want to talk about the coach he had signed with at MU.

This was a college game with genuinely bad feelings, and there is no more passionate kind of sports. Arkansas beat Mizzou two weeks ago in a rival-worthy atmosphere in Fayetteville, and the Tigers did the same thing here — except much louder, and much more thoroughly. Alex Oriakhi said he’d never seen Haith this emotional, joking that he didn’t recognize his coach.
Some of the on-court mean-mugging is specific to this game, to this situation. Anderson — they call him Suitcase Mike around here now — left Mizzou two years ago via a news release. The fans he left behind felt abandoned, even angry. Same with the players.

They rallied behind a new coach none of them had chosen out of high school and played some of the most efficient and effective basketball in the country last year. Won the last Big 12 tournament they’ll ever play for — before a wretched loss to Norfolk State in the first round of March Madness.

They take a lot of pride here in those 30 wins, so you can imagine how it hits them when Anderson essentially takes full credit for the success and implies he could’ve taken the team to the Final Four.

You might say the response was a different kind of “40 minutes of hell” for Anderson.

This was a two-hour beatdown. Dunks and ally-oops and quite possibly the best defense MU has played all season. The Tigers led by double digits nine minutes in, and by 26 at halftime. On one end of the court, you would see Bowers dunking. On the other, you’d see someone from Arkansas heaving a prayer at the end of the shot clock.

This was a toxic mix of emotion, especially on MU’s side. Bowers is a beloved figure here — 1,202 points, five years, two coaches and one major knee surgery will do that — so there would’ve been loud moments no matter what. Add the fact that they’re playing against the coach who left them in the cold two years ago, and those moments will stretch out.

Put it all together, and you have the loudest night at Mizzou Arena since the Tigers beat their old rival. Their new rivalry doesn’t have the same history, or unabashed disrespect. But at least for one night, they closed the gap a little bit.

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Fans delight as Missouri routs ex-coach Anderson and Arkansas 93-63

March 5 By TEREZ A. PAYLOR The Kansas City Star

COLUMBIA — So this is what revenge looks like. It’s Mike Anderson, finally strolling onto Norm Stewart Court on Tuesday, being booed vociferously for the perceived “sins” of his past.

It’s Missouri coach Frank Haith removing his jacket in anger in the first half — despite his team cruising toward a double-digit lead at the time — and later engaging (somewhat uncharacteristically) in a contentious — but brief — on-court shouting match with Anderson.

And finally, it’s the Razorbacks — the same team that handed the Tigers a disappointing two-point loss one month ago — getting crushed in nearly every statistical category as Missouri built a 26-point halftime lead on the way to a convincing 93-63 victory in front of a raucous sellout crowd 15,061 at Mizzou Arena.

“It’s Senior Night,” Anderson said. “You expect emotions to be sky-high.”

By the time it was over, these moments and plenty others like them provided the highlights of a game in which the crowd, rightly or wrongly, made it clear from the get-go that it wanted Anderson to get his reckoning, despite the fact he coached five largely successful seasons in Columbia and helped Missouri move on from the disastrous Quin Snyder era.

It was, apparently, the way Anderson had left in March 2011 — with no mews conference and no explanation — that clearly continued to rankle those in attendance, and they proceeded to provide a loud home-court advantage, though Missouri — which improved to 22-8, 11-6 in the Southeastern Conference — needed a little time to heat up.

Despite a moving Senior Night ceremony for their three seniors — Laurence Bowers, Keion Bell and Alex Oriakhi — the Tigers got off to a shaky start, committing five turnovers over the first four minutes as Arkansas, 18-12, 9-8 in the SEC, took a 7-5 lead.

But it would not last, as the Tigers calmed down enough to let their size, shooting and defense take over. Missouri proceeded to outscore Arkansas 43-15 the rest of the half, thanks to 13-of-23 shooting from the field (56.5 percent) and a 26-9 rebounding advantage.
Arkansas, meanwhile, struggled mightily from the field, shooting 10-of-32 (31.3 percent), including a dreadful 1-for-15 on three-pointers in the half.

“We were on point defensively, shrinking gaps, keeping them out of the paint, rebounding the ball,” Haith said. “Other than our live-ball turnovers, from a defensive standpoint we were really good.”

The Razorbacks’ shooting helped Missouri neutralize a 10-3 turnover disadvantage at halftime, as the Tigers took a 48-22 lead into the break. Arkansas could only watch in the second half as the Tigers, who led by as many as 34 points, used the same ingredients to pour it on the rest of the way, despite sophomore guard B.J. Young’s 27 points.

Make no mistake about it, on this night, much of Missouri’s energy came from Haith, whose intensity spoke volumes. Whether it was Senior Night, or the 73-71 loss the Razorbacks handed his team on Feb. 16, the fact the Tigers needed a win to have a shot at a double bye at next week’s SEC tournament or recent comments Anderson made about the role he played in Missouri’s success last year, Missouri’s coach was clearly amped.

“I looked at him on the sideline and I didn’t really recognize him,” Oriakhi said with a laugh. “That was the most emotional I’ve ever seen him.”

Haith would later deny that, though his actions indicated that Oriakhi was onto something.

At one point in the first half, Anderson — apparently displeased with something Haith had done — yelled something at Haith at a timeout. Haith was not too happy about whatever was said, because he briefly had to be restrained.

And later in the half, with Missouri leading by more than 20 points, Haith waved his arms to the crowd and his team, urging them to keep the pressure on. Haith would later say it was a miscommunication — he was talking to his team, and Anderson thought he was saying something else — and that he tried to explained that to Anderson after the game. Anderson also called it a miscommunication and added he wasn’t making “too much about it.”

But afterward, much of Anderson’s news conference centered around the way he had left Missouri, not his relationship with Haith. When asked if he had any regrets, Anderson said he did not because he informed his players of his decision then he told the administration.


Anderson conceded that the only emotional part of the game was competing against Bowers and junior Phil Pressey, the two remaining holdovers from his Mizzou tenure. Pressey rebounded from a five-turnover first half to finish with eight points and six assists (and zero turnovers after the break), while Bowers, who scored a season-low two points and had four rebounds against Arkansas a month ago, bounced back to score a team-high 24 points and grab a season-high 11 rebounds on Tuesday.
Sophomore guard Jabari Brown (23 points), junior guard Earnest Ross (11 points) and Oriakhi (10 points, eight rebounds) also scored in double figures for Missouri, which completed its home slate with a 17-0 record and went undefeated at home for the first time since the 2008-2009 season, when Anderson led the Tigers to the Elite Eight.

But on Tuesday night, the memories of that season seemed like a distant memory. This game was about revenge — for Haith, his players and even the fans, who booed Anderson one last time as he walked off the court.

However, it was also about sending the seniors out right. And as Bell, Oriakhi and Bowers walked off the court together for the final time, arms raised as the crowd gave them a standing ovation with three minutes, 17 seconds left, it was the scoreboard — which read Missouri 88, Arkansas 57 — that made it clear the Tigers had succeeded on both counts.

“This was the way I wanted to go out my Senior Night,” Bowers said.
COLUMBIA MISSOURIAN

MU professor uses grant to educate on turning sap into syrup

By Stephanie Graflage
March 5, 2013 | 8:10 p.m. CST

COLUMBIA — Forestry students are tapping maple trees this week to turn the sap into “MUple syrup,” a new product to pour over pancakes.

The MU Ag Foundation provided a $15,000 grant to get students and landowners involved in the production of maple syrup. The result was a business plan to brand, bottle and distribute MUple (mew-pie) syrup with a black-and-gold label.

The program is under the supervision of MU Forestry Professor Richard Guyette who is working with 10 students at the university's Baskett Wildlife Research and Education Center near Ashland.

The grant allowed them to purchase 100 taps and a new evaporator, used to remove water from the sap. Students have been building the evaporator, collecting firewood and drilling tap holes for two weeks, Guyette said. Peak sugaring season in Missouri occurs when temperatures are below freezing at night and regularly above freezing during the day, according to the state Department of Conservation.

After gathering the sap, boiling takes place this weekend, and the syrup will be poured into canning jars until the students are ready to bottle. The homegrown product should be available for distribution within the next few months, Guyette said, although plans are still uncertain.

Nicknamed mid-Missouri's Sugarman, Guyette began his maple syrup operation in 1974 after purchasing land with a number of existing trees. A New York state native, he has maintained his hobby for nearly 30 years. He said he intends to take a year off to help educate students and landowners about this industry. Eventually, the project will involve business students, he said, as well as others interested in further developing the current plan.

“Over the years I’ve gotten phone calls about maple syrup and what to do,” he said. “This is a potential money maker for landowners in the state.”