Tim Evans awarded first Kemper Fellowship of 2013

By GH Lindsey
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COLUMBIA — First, one student stood and clapped. Then, an entire row of the large conference room joined. Soon, the entire room of about 200 people was on its feet and applauding Tim Evans as he received the first of the 2013 William T. Kemper Fellowships for Teaching Excellence at MU. Deputy Chancellor Mike Middleton and Commerce Bank Chairman Jim Schatz, along with a group of faculty and staff, surprised Evans with the fellowship and the $10,000 check that accompanies it as he was lecturing Monday morning in the Adams Conference Center at the Veterinary Medicine Building.

Five Kemper Fellowships are given each year to honor outstanding teachers at MU. The fellowships were established in 1991 with a $500,000 gift from the family of William Kemper, an MU graduate and Kansas City civic leader. Three more fellowships will be awarded Tuesday, and the final award will be presented by the end of the week. The fellowship trust fund is managed by Commerce Bank. Upon receiving the award, Evans thanked MU for the opportunity to work at the university.

“I'm honored and humbled to have a job here,” he said. Evans, an associate professor of toxicology, joined the College of Veterinary Medicine in 2001. He teaches classes on poisonous plants and how to diagnose and treat poisons in animals, but he is best known for his sense of humor, his brightly colored Hawaiian shirts and his superhero alter-ego, “The Antidote.”

“I always wanted to be a stand-up comic, but I guess this is the next best thing,” Evans said. Evans might be funny in the lecture hall, but he takes his teaching seriously, veterinary medicine professor Craig Franklin said in a news release. “For his classroom lectures, he relentlessly prepares, spending days updating his materials and constantly self-critiquing his teaching style. His teaching does not stop in the classroom, and his passion for teaching and love for his students make him a deserving winner of the Kemper Award.”
Tim Evans, an associate professor of toxicology in the University of Missouri College of Veterinary Medicine, received a 2013 William T. Kemper Fellowship for Teaching Excellence this morning. MU Deputy Chancellor Mike Middleton, Commerce Bank Chairman Jim Schatz and a group of professors, administrators and staff surprised Evans with the fellowship, which includes a $10,000 check. Fellowships are awarded to five outstanding teachers at the University of Missouri each year. Evans, who has been a member of the MU faculty since 2001, is well-known around the College of Veterinary Medicine for his superhero alter-ego The Antidote and lectures about how to treat animals that ingest toxic materials. MU will be awarding four more Kemper Fellowships this week
Many folks are skipping marriage these days, but a new study shows that happily married couples consider themselves healthier than their unmarried peers.

A University of Missouri assistant professor found that, in all stages of marriage, positive or negative relationships affect a person's perception of his or her health. So spouses should note that the way they treat each other, and how happy they are in their marriage, affects both partners' health. In other words, cool it with the unnecessary arguments.

"Engaging with your spouse is not going to cure cancer, but building stronger relationships can improve both people's spirits and well-being and lower their stress," said Christine Proulx, who analyzed data from more than 700 married folks.

So, is the study accurate?

"I know from experience that being in an unhappy marriage can be very unhealthy physically and mentally for a person. I was in an unhappy marriage for 19 years and paid the price for it with my health," said Suzanne Cordner of Uniontown, Ohio, who is now remarried. "The stress I was under created havoc in my body. It weakened my immune system, leading to many illnesses, and I still, to this day 14 years later, have medical issues that I need to see a doctor every week for."

Lynn Ruediger of Richfield, Ohio, agrees that a bad marriage is certainly terrible on a person's health — physical and mental.

"Negativity can be so destructive on a human being that having an unhappy partnership should be assessed and possibly ended," said Ruediger, who has been married for 46 years. "I feel there are times when married people who still enjoy their lives together are happier and healthier. Often, a loving spouse is the reason you take better care of your health. You socialize often with like-minded people, and you generally feel cared for."

Proulx suggested health professionals consider a patient's personal relationship when designing a treatment plan.
"I suspect we'd have higher rates of adherence if medical professionals placed more of an emphasis on incorporating families and spouses in patients' care," she said.

But Dave Egan, of Stow, Ohio, who has been married for 38 years, said that while mental and physical health can be attributed to a happy marriage, that doesn't necessarily mean that the happily married are more fit than their unmarried counterparts.

“To personalize it, I have a happy marriage and satisfy the requirement of being mentally and physically healthy. However, could I be just as healthy if I were single? There is no way to test that unless I were to get a divorce, allowing for a comparison," noted Egan, adding he’s not interested in trying that out.

But what about a person whose spouse has died? Does the happiness from a good marriage linger enough in the heart to keep the person healthy?

Becky Costello of Akron, Ohio, has been widowed for two years. She and Tim were married 36 years. It wasn’t a perfect marriage, she noted, but Tim was perfect for her. And their marriage was happy.

“During my period of acute grief, I was not as robustly healthy as I had been prior to Tim's death. I lost interest in food (Tim was a graduate of the Culinary Institute of America, and a talented chef) and I had difficulty maintaining a healthy diet and meal schedule, and as a result I lost weight,” she said. “My sleep habits were also affected; four or five hours of sleep each night constituted a new good night’s sleep.”

Mentally, the bereaved Costello lost her ability to feel joy, hope and other emotions.

“But I know the happiness from loving Tim and being his wife was still in my heart even during the time of acute grief. And as I worked through the acute grief, I began to reconnect to those feelings, including the happiness and love from our marriage, which remain with me to this day."
Like Miami, Missouri's Haith files motion to dismiss with NCAA

Missouri coach Frank Haith has filed a motion to dismiss his charges with the NCAA, his South Florida-based attorney told CBSSports.com on Monday night.

Haith had been charged in a notice of allegations with "failure to promote an atmosphere of compliance" while he was Miami's coach in 2010 and 2011.

"Frank Haith has filed a motion with the NCAA Division I Committee on Infractions," attorney Michael Buckner wrote in an email. "The motion asks, in part, for the committee to dismiss the enforcement staff's allegation against the University of Missouri head men's basketball coach."

The move comes after the University of Miami filed a motion Friday to dismiss the entire case against it. The Associated Press reported over the weekend that Miami had officially filed. CBSSports.com was able to confirm that through sources.

The AP also reported that three other former Miami assistant football and basketball coaches have filed similar motions.

Miami faces a charge of lack of institutional control from the NCAA regarding its dealings with former booster Nevin Shapiro.

The accused in the Miami case are currently inside a 90-day window to respond to the NCAA's notice of allegations.

The NCAA threw out 20 percent of the evidence gathered in the case after it was discovered that attorney Maria Elena Perez had been paid to use subpoena power to depose former Miami equipment staffer Sean Allen and Shapiro business partner Michael Huyghe. That NCAA relationship with Perez extended beyond those two subjects, the Miami Herald reported this week. Investigator Stephanie Hannah pursued the use of Perez after taking over the Miami case for the fired Ameen Najjar.

The lawyer hired by the NCAA to review the initial improper use of Perez, Ken Wainstein, then told the Associated Press on Thursday multiple persons inside the association knew of the use of Perez in the Miami case. Wainstein explained them away saying NCAA officials knew of the "arrangement with Perez but did not realize the NCAA was paying" her.
MU professors’ company Nanova receives $6 million from Chinese investors

Columbia-based technology company Nanova will receive $6 million to produce new dental, orthopedic and cardiovascular products using nanotechnology.

The investment in the company, co-founded by MU Associate Professor of Mechanical and Aerospace Engineering Hao Li, is the result of an agreement between the City of Columbia, the Jiangsu Wujin Hi-Tech Industrial Zone in China and Chinese-based investment firm Summit View Partners.

MU faculty, Deputy Chancellor Michael Middleton, Missouri Fourth Congressional District Congresswoman Vicky Hartzler, Missouri Representative Chris Kelly and Columbia Mayor Bob McDavid attended the signing on March 26 at Mark Twain Ballroom.

The funding will be put toward the development of healthcare products, including screws used for orthopedic surgery and a dental brush that could improve the process of sealing cavities.

The investment will be added to the $10 million that the company has already received in funding from other sources.

“The investment will be partially spent in the U.S., partially spent in China,” Li said. “The primary production will be in the U.S., but also possibly some in China, and we may put different things in each place depending on the need of the markets.”

The company originally hoped to have at least one of these products developed by 2010, but the wait may have been a benefit rather than a setback, Li said.

“We are still working on it so there’s a delay, but that delay can be positive since we will get a better product,” Li said. “Definitely, by next year, we should have a medical device cleared by the (U.S. Food and Drug Administration).”

The Wujin industrial zone, the technological district involved in the agreement, is home to automobile production, electronics manufacturing and new energy industries, according to the district’s website. In 2009, the district had an industrial output of about $12 billion.

Li founded Nanova in 2006 with Associate Professor of Mechanical and Aerospace Engineering Qingsong Yu. Li said MU was instrumental in the founding of the company, helping the company at its start and licensing technology to them today.

“Without MU there would be no Nanova,” Li said.
MU study finds protein-rich breakfast beneficial

Eating a protein-rich breakfast can lead to healthier eating habits later on in the day, according to a study by MU Assistant Professor Heather Leidy.

More than 78 million U.S. adults and about 12 million U.S. children and adolescents were obese between 2009 and 2010, according to the Center for Disease Control and Prevention.

Leidy, a member of the Nutrition and Exercise Physiology Department, is one of many researchers seeking to understand the obesity problem in the U.S.

Leidy and her team studied 20 overweight or obese females ranging in ages 18 to 20 years old. Participants skipped breakfast, ate a breakfast with a normal amount of protein or consumed a high-protein breakfast. Calorie, dietary fat, fiber, sugar and energy density intake were consistent among the different samples.

Throughout the daylong study, participants answered questionnaires, had their blood drawn and had their brains scanned using functional magnetic resonance imaging (fMRI) before they ate dinner. Researchers used information from the brain scan to monitor brain signals that control appetite.

The participants who consumed the high-protein breakfast felt less hungry later in the day and snacked on fewer high-fat and high-sugar foods in the evening.

“I really noticed that I would just eat later,” study participant Kyleigh Johnson said. “I think I was making up for not eating earlier. Energy-wise, I think I was not as tired.”

The high-protein breakfast participants ate included 35 grams of protein. In perspective, one large whole egg contains about six grams of protein, according to the Egg Nutrition Center. One five-ounce container of plain Greek yogurt may contain about 15 grams of protein.

The research concluded most teenagers that skip breakfast sleep as late as possible and compromise time that could be spent eating. Teenagers are also less motivated to make breakfast if they have to prepare it themselves.

Leidy has completed multiple studies on protein-rich diets. Satiation, or dietary satisfaction, has been a focus of her work.

There haven’t been many well-controlled studies looking at why different types of protein might be more satiating, said Victoria Vieira-Potter, assistant professor of nutrition and exercise physiology.

“Like any study it has to be replicated,” Vieira-Potter said. “As you might imagine with any human study, there are lots of variables.”
The Beef Board, a government entity that regulates beef production, and the Egg Nutrition Center, an information center on egg-related research, funded Leidy’s research. While the funding for the research came from organizations associated with high-protein foods, it did not influence the results of the study, Vieira-Potter said.

“Dr. Leidy is completely unbiased,” Vieira-Potter said. “She’s a researcher, so she’s doing it for the science, not for the money.”

Leidy plans to research whether body weight is healthier in young people who frequently eat protein-rich breakfasts.

Leidy was unable to be reached for comment.

“I definitely think her research is sound and certainly important,” Vieira-Potter said.
National Science Foundation recognizes MU assistant professor

David Mendoza-Cozatl, MU assistant professor in the division of plant sciences, received the National Science Foundation’s CAREER grant. This extremely prestigious grant ensures $1 million over a five-year period to enable research and education.

“It’s a little bit of a scary feeling,” Mendoza-Cozatl said. “It’s a lot of responsibility. The foundation is really trusting you and your science. I really feel I need to give back and live up to what I said I can do.”

The grant is aimed at scientists who are at the beginning stages of their careers.

“It’s for setting up a career in terms of research and education,” said Heather Hunt, MU assistant professor of bioengineering. “The foundation thinks in terms of ‘This person is going to have a rock-star career ahead of them.’”

Mendoza-Cozatl said his main research concerns how plants accumulate metals. People rely on plants to absorb nutritious metals like iron and zinc, which are essential and very important for health. Non-essential metals such as lead, mercury and chromium behave like essential metals but are not good for human consumption. These non-essential metals interfere with essential metals.

“We want healthy food with the right amount of good metals and not toxic metals,” Mendoza-Cozatl said.

Most plants’ ability to accumulate toxic metals also do some good, Mendoza-Cozatl said. After environmental contamination from the Industrial Revolution, plants have been used to clean up contaminated areas with a process called bioremediation. The process works by using plants to absorb harmful metals from the ground. Once the plant is removed, the metals it absorbed can be disposed of easily.

“It’s the true meaning of green technology,” Mendoza-Cozatl said. “We are using plants to get the job done.”

The CAREER grant has a strong focus on incorporating education with research, Mendoza-Cozatl said. This can mean working with outreach beyond simply training undergraduate students or teaching. Mendoza-Cozatl’s project involved two main educational components. His lab is building an interdisciplinary connection between engineering and biology.

“The future of (agriculture) is more of a merging of plant sciences and engineering,” Hunt said. “It’s solving problems using engineering methodology. There are a lot of cool problems for us to solve.”

The second project involved bringing journalism students into the lab. Mendoza-Cozatl said he hoped it would relate what the lab does to a broader audience.
“When (the journalists) write about (science), they’ll have first-hand experience and perspective about what it’s like,” Mendoza-Cozatl said.

Mendoza-Cozatl is also part of the Interdisciplinary Plant Group. IPG is an umbrella community of 57 faculty members dedicated to research within the area of plant biology. It is part of Food for the 21st Century Program, which is funded through MU. Its research areas cover biochemistry, biological sciences, plant sciences, computer science and forestry.

“MU has a true reputation for collaboration,” IPG Director Robert Sharp said.

The IPG’s main theme is to study how plants react to changing environments. IPG focuses its studies on genetic diversity, on developmental mechanisms and on biotic and abiotic interactions, according to its website.

Sharp, who is also a professor in the division of plant sciences, was very involved in Mendoza-Cozatl’s hiring a year and a half ago. After Mendoza-Cozatl was hired, Sharp sat on his mentoring committee, a program designed for new faculty members.

Mendoza-Cozatl said that even though the National Science Foundation is giving the grant to his lab, it’s a more complicated process.

“NSF would have never given me a grant if it weren’t for the institution of MU and the Bond Life Sciences Center,” Mendoza-Cozatl said.

Mendoza-Cozatl said he is excited for what the grant means to the program.

“It feels really good,” Mendoza-Cozatl said. “This is beginning of something, not the end goal.”
Symposium focuses on sustainable agriculture

Speakers bring call for change.

By Rudi Keller

Activists opposed to factory farming will bring the message of sustainable agriculture to Columbia next week with a symposium designed to show how large-scale production is undermining rural communities and degrading the food supply.

"CAFO — Far from the Farm" is being organized by Daria Kerridge, an adjunct assistant professor for art at the University of Missouri, and will feature speakers including MU Professor Emeritus John Ikerd, nutritionist Melinda Hemmelgarn and animal cruelty activist Gene Baur of New York.

CAFOs are concentrated animal feeding operations, farms that have thousands of animals — or in the case of poultry operations, more than 1 million — being readied for processors. The farms generally are owned or under contract to large corporations such as Smithfield Foods Inc. or Tyson.

The symposium, which is not sponsored by the university, brings together activists from environmental, nutrition and rural economic development fields, Kerridge said.

"I have found, living in Missouri the last few years, that the farm is an exceptional icon, and I have a great respect for the people who are growing our food," Kerridge said. "I have a love for the environment and want it to be protected. It is called mindful stewardship, and that is the main perspective on why I am doing it."

Ikerd will be the keynote speaker at a panel discussion at 2 p.m. April 9 in Ellis Auditorium. That will be followed at 5:30 p.m. with another discussion at Ragtag Cinema on Hitt Street. There also will be events at the Columbia Public Library and at the Columbia Art League.

Ikerd retired from MU's College of Agriculture in 2000, and he said he was becoming disillusioned with the farming models he had promoted through his career.
Since his retirement, Ikerd has written seven books focusing on sustainable economics and farming.

Farm economists focused on mechanization, standardization and consolidation as the means for increasing food supplies and reducing the labor demands of agriculture, Ikerd said. In the farm crisis of the 1980s, when losses cost many small producers their land, his views began to change, he said.

"I began questioning whether the thing was sustainable," he said. "I saw that this kind of agriculture had to consistently drive family farms out of business, and I saw what happened to family farmers and rural communities."
MU musicians use yoga to set tone for relaxation

By Caitlin Kerfin
April 2, 2013 | 6:00 a.m. CDT

COLUMBIA — MU music students take an hour outside their noisy rehearsal rooms on Fridays to center themselves on mats in a dark, quiet room and practice yoga.

The exercises help the musicians with their body alignment and tone, Paola Savvidou, an MU assistant professor of piano pedagogy, said.

“Pianists and other musicians a lot of times hold their breath, which tightens muscles,” she said. And wind musicians might strain while holding long notes, hindering their tone quality.

Yoga movements help musicians better regulate their breathing for practice and performances, she said.

Savvidou, co-adviser of MU’s Collegiate Chapter of the Music Teachers National Association, researches incorporating movement into her piano lessons to improve alignment. She connected with the group’s vice president, Grace Lyden, a piano student with an interest in yoga, and the two decided to offer a free class to musicians.

Lyden’s final requirement to receive a YogaFit certification was teaching a class for free as service hours. She was already teaching yoga at the MU Student Recreation Complex, and she wanted to combine her training with music.

Savvidou is beginning a qualitative study in the fall with her new course called movement and wellness for musicians. She hopes to expose musicians to different disciplines that use movements such as Feldenkrais exercises and the Alexander technique.

Relating movement and music is a fairly new field, Savvidou said. She uses injury-prevention strategies that can be utilized by anyone and relates them specifically to musicians.
The students will be the subjects of the study, demonstrating how — or whether — yoga and other exercises improve their physical approach to their instruments. The relaxation techniques will also address performance anxiety and learning to manage stress.

Different kinds of musicians can have muscle stiffness in different areas. A violinist might be particularly tense in the neck, while a pianist might have stiffness in his or her back, Savvidou said.

Rachel Aubuchon, an MU School of Music accompanist, said yoga "helps loosen up a lot of rigidity and soreness from sitting all day."

Lyden makes sure to incorporate specific poses and stretches to benefit musicians, such as hip openers to relieve tightness caused from sitting in the practice room for long periods of time.

“Musicians especially love when movement happens with the breath because they are familiar with using pulse and rhythm,” Lyden said. Yoga poses such as cat-cow or moonflowers and sunflowers feel natural, she said.

Attention to the core of the body is also incorporated into the session because musicians utilize core muscles to sit up straight or expand their diaphragm when playing or singing, Lyden said.

“I think yoga in general helps regulate breath and being able to control your body which increases stamina,” MU music student Rebecca Preston said.

The class is made up of music students and faculty who meet at 5:15 p.m. on Fridays in McKee Gymnasium.

Though this was originally a semester project, the group wants to continue the class, Savvidou said.

“Faculty also attend because if the faculty are informed, they can transfer that to their students in lessons,” Savvidou said.