MU Health Care breaks ground on new clinic
Facility is slated to open in 2015.

By KARYN SPORY

Wednesday, June 26, 2013 at 2:00 pm

Representatives from the University of Missouri System and University of Missouri Health Care broke ground Wednesday on the University Physicians-South Providence Medical Park, a $35 million project that will bring several medical practices under one roof.

Mitch Wasden, chief executive officer and chief operating officer of MU Health, said the two-story, 85,000-square-foot facility is set to open in the spring of 2015 and represents the future of health care facilities.

"I think over the next five to seven years, you'll see more facilities like this as we try to upgrade our brand and our services to patients," Wasden said.

Steven Zweig, chairman of the Curtis W. and Ann H. Long Department of Family and Community Medicine, said the clinic was designed with the patient in mind by housing exam rooms and accommodating services all in one area.

Zweig said the facility was designed looking ahead to patient, physician and technological needs 20 years down the line.

Once built, the clinic, located on 25 acres at 551 E. Southampton Drive, will house pediatric primary care services, family medicine and expanded outpatient behavioral health services. The facility also will include 30 rooms for pediatric patients, 15 rooms for outpatient behavioral health care, two conference rooms for group behavioral therapy, 48 rooms for family medicine patients, an on-site laboratory, radiology services and a 2,000-square-foot pharmacy with drive-through services. The clinic also will include more than 50 physicians and more than 100 staff.

UM System President Tim Wolfe said the clinic is a strong example of MU's commitment to the state of Missouri. "The facility will help us train the next generation of health care professionals with the latest technology," he said.
Hal Williamson, vice chancellor of MU Health, said the clinic will be a replacement for the facility located at Green Meadows. "During the past two decades, our Green Meadows footprint has grown to include several buildings totaling about 50,000 square feet," he said, adding that as the demand for health care has increased, they have outgrown the building.

According to a news release, the new clinic is expected to receive 100,000 patients annually.

In 2012, the UM Board of Curators authorized $30 million in bonds to build the new facility to replace the Green Meadows clinic, which houses a pharmacy, general pediatrics and an adult psychology clinic, among other services.

MU Health spokeswoman Mary Jenkins said the $35 million project was funded by the bonds and operating reserves. Jenkins added that once the South Providence facility opens, the Green Meadows facility will be sold.

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Construction starts on new MU Health Care clinic

Wednesday, June 26, 2013 | 7:31 p.m. CDT

PROVIDED BY UNIVERSITY HEALTH CARE
BY YUNA PARK

COLUMBIA — Construction has begun on a new MU Health Care clinic on East Southampton Drive in southern Columbia.

University Physicians-South Providence clinic will house pediatric primary care services now being provided at the Green Meadows clinic, family medicine services being provided at the Green Meadows and Woodrail clinics and outpatient behavioral health services, according to a news release from MU Health Care.

The Green Meadows clinic is closing when the new clinic is done and the facilities put up for sale, said Derek Thompson, MU Health Care spokesman.

The two-story, 85,000-square-foot clinic will have a 30 rooms for pediatric patients equipped with measurement stations for height, weight and vital signs, 15 rooms for outpatient behavioral health care and 48 rooms for family medicine patients, the release said.

The clinic also will have a pharmacy with drive-through service, radiology services and a laboratory for medical testing.

More than 50 physicians and 100 staff members will work there, the release said.

The clinic will be on 25 acres and will be part of South Providence Medical Park. The project’s $35 million price tag includes cost of the property, the release said.

Groundbreaking was held Wednesday morning.

Construction is scheduled to be done in spring 2015.
Bright minds make bonds at Missouri Scholars Academy

Mike Kersulov, a graduate student in English education at Indiana University, explains a strategy game that is described as “Dungeons and Dragons meets Shakespeare.” The game was played by students attending the Missouri Scholars Academy at the University of Missouri. Students, from left, are Authority Anue, McKinley CLA High School, St. Louis; Andrew White, University City High School; Kimberly Henry, Raymore-Peculiar High School; Jena Staggs, Blue Springs High School; and Sarah Van Hoesen, Ozark High School.

By Karyn Spory

Wednesday, June 26, 2013 at 2:00 pm

In a small room in the Geological Sciences building on the University of Missouri campus, 20 high school juniors sit around a table, seeing whether they can roll a high enough number on dice to change their fate — or at least the fate of the Shakespeare characters they are portraying during “Dungeons and Dragons meets Shakespeare.”
The students are participating in the Missouri Scholars Academy, which is in its 29th year and brings together the brightest minds in Missouri high schools for three weeks of academics, extracurricular and bonding.

“We’re playing through that tragedy as if we were characters in the story,” said Kimberly Henry, 16, of Raymore-Peculiar High School.

While playing through the various acts, the students could try to alter a character’s fate by calling “cut” and making an edit, such as sending another character off stage and out of the game or using a sword to protect a fellow character.

Depending on the type of edit, instructor Mike Kersulov will give a number for which the student must hit or exceed by rolling the dice — the more drastic the edit, the higher number the participant must roll.

Kersulov is a graduate student at Indiana University and a former Missouri Scholars Academy participant.

Academy Director Ted Tarkow said the program is for “bright students” who rank in the top half of 1 percent of rising high school juniors. Tarkow said there are 325 kids involved in this year’s program, and about 9,500 individuals have gone through the program since its inception.

“Ninety-eight percent of those who could have graduated from high school have done so, and 90 percent who could have graduated from college have done so,” he said. Tarkow added that of the 9,500 people, around 70 percent have earned advanced degrees.

Tarkow said students come from nearly every county in the state, and for many, this is a “transformative experience.”

“For some, this is another camp to go to. ... But for others, it’s the first time they’ve been around kids that are as bright as they are,” Tarkow said.

Henry said her experience at the academy has been “liberating because so many of the people think the same way.”

Tarkow said some kids live in communities where “being bright can be a liability” and can lead to being ostracized. Tarkow said at the academy, being bright is celebrated, and it allows these kids to network.

However, Tarkow said the greatest lesson he hopes students learn is that because they’re bright, they have a responsibility to do something with that talent and knowledge.

“What can you do with the talents you’ve got for your own good, but for other’s people’s good, as well,” he said.
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Lost Boy of Sudan speaks at University of Missouri

BY Elizabeth Bissell Miller, MA, MA | Posted: Wednesday, June 26, 2013 08:38 AM

Columbia, Mo. — Each year the highly selective Missouri Scholars Academy, which is an enrichment program for 330 of Missouri's best and brightest high school students, takes place at the University of Missouri (MU) each summer. No one anticipated, however, that this year's Academy would involve a moving speech by a renowned humanitarian activist, John Dau, one of the lost boys of Sudan.

As a result of MSA Teacher Brian Stuhlman's relentless effort and energy, the thoughtful programming of the Missouri Scholars Academy, and the generosity of the MU Vice Provost for International Programs Handy Williamson among others, for the first time the entire MU community got a chance to hear John Dau's story of survival, struggle, and triumph first hand.

Born into a loving family and thriving agricultural community in South Sudan, John Dau had a happy childhood taking care of family animals and learning all aspects of farming. Dau, however, received a shock when the northern militia attacked his small, rural village in the middle of the night. Running after who he believed was his father, Dau realized that he ran after a neighbor to perceived safety in the jungle. That safety, however, turned into a nightmare of multiple migrations – first east to Ethiopia, then west to Kenya, and then finally across the ocean to a small community in New York that provided refuge and hope. It also involved many episodes of near starvation, beatings by the militia, travel at night, threats from lions and hyenas, and periodic severe dehydration.

Yet each step of the journey gave Dau hope that he would in fact find happiness again. On his journey east to Ethiopia, incredible optimism helped him create a legion of lost boys and girls that grew to number 25,000. First, there were 20 boys, then 27, then 1,200 divided into families of 50. Two or three boys died each day of cholera, malaria, and typhoid. By the time Dau and his fellow lost boys made their way to Ethiopia, they received food and clothes from the United Nations High Commission for Refugees and the World Food Program. Life was on the mend in this period of Dau's life.

Unfortunately, Sudan's problems finally spilled into Ethiopia in 1991. The nearly 27,000 lost boys and girls were sent away. The Ethiopians sent troops after the children and tried to shoot them. Only 18,000 managed to get across the border. The Christian Sudanese Liberation Army then helped the boys and girls get clothes. Unfortunately, the northern Sudan government sent aircraft to bomb the children twice a day. The boys and girls then escaped to the interior of Sudan. They now numbered 12,000. They were attacked, and attacked, and attacked.

In 1992, the lost boys and girls made their way west to Kenya. Fortunately, the United Nations built the children a clinic and started a school. Dau, who was 17, relished learning and was finally able to go to
school. According to Dau, he learned a precious lesson: “education is my mother and my father.” The children took turns writing lessons with sticks in the dirt and took turns playing “teacher”, so that all would learn their lessons expertly through rigorous recitations.

In 2000, the Americans came. The children were offered a chance to go to Syracuse, New York. Dau signed up and settled into an apartment, learned that Americans wear different clothes in different seasons, saw snow for the first time, and worked three jobs to pay his bills. Remarkably, he also went to school, earning his associates in 2004 and then his bachelor’s degree.

But, that wasn’t enough. He ran the Lost Boys of Sudan Foundation and raised $35,000 to help children in South Sudan. He then set up a new foundation and raised $800,000 to build a medical clinic in South Sudan, a region which had never known this kind of medical care. He set up the South Sudan Institute and now runs the John Dau Foundation. He has raised over $1 million to improve the lives of those in South Sudan. He brought his mom and sister to the US, has written two books, and has written movie scripts.

But, that still was not enough. Dau speaks to audiences around the world to share this story of hope and optimism, and, most importantly, the plight of children in wars across the globe. He also leaves his audiences with valuable lessons. He tells us: “Don’t let what happened in your life hold you hostage.” And, last, he tells us: “When you become successful in your life, please give back to your community.”

Dau’s unique story shows us how individuals can overcome extreme obstacles to achieve personal and professional success. Dau is truly an inspiration. With a powerful sermon-like quality, his strong voice tells us that, in his life, “the light that is has demolished the dark that was.” So, it seems, the light of hope, radiance, daybreak, generosity, and every other kind of salvation has destroyed the darkness of bitter evening cold, random beatings from soldiers, starvation, and death.

For Dau, who narrowly escaped death on several occasions, it is clear that he is guided to light and by an inner light of hope, strength, and resilience. He achieved things he never thought possible – fatherhood, non-profit leader, hospital funder, human rights activist, humanitarian, international leader, and so much more. He is a living reminder of the many conflicts that have come before, which devastate families, communities, and children. And, his most important gift? Dau ensures that we will never forget.

To learn more about John Dau, go to http://www.johndaufoundation.org/

To learn more about the Missouri Scholars Academy, go to http://www.moscholars.org/
Missouri journalism school names 8 medal winners

Posted: Jun 27, 2013 6:30 AM CST Updated: Jun 27, 2013 6:31 AM CST

COLUMBIA, Mo. (AP) - A Washington-based investigative reporter and a globe-trotting New York Times columnist head the 2013 winners of Missouri Honor Medals for Distinguished Service in Journalism.

The University of Missouri School of Journalism announced the eight honorees this week and will present the medals on campus in October.

Charles Lewis is an American University professor and former "60 Minutes" producer who founded the Center for Public Integrity in 1989. He's joined by Times columnist Nicholas Kristof, an author and 2-time Pulitzer Prize winner known for reporting from some of the world's most impoverished regions.

The other winners are New York Times executive Michael Golden, a Missouri graduate; Washington Post photographer Carol Guzy; South Florida Sun-Sentinel sports editor Greg Lee; Associated Press correspondent Aye Aye Win; Hearst Television; and the global communications company FleishmanHillard.
Downtown group considers how to improve gateways

Providence, College seen as important.

By Andrew Denney

Wednesday, June 26, 2013 at 2:00 pm

The Downtown Leadership Council voted Tuesday to begin talks on developing a comprehensive transportation plan for central Columbia that could include bringing College Avenue and Providence Road into the city's control.

Pat Fowler, president of the North Central Columbia Neighborhood Association and a newly appointed member of the leadership council, proposed the motion to start talking about downtown transportation, which members said should include parking, access to alternative forms of transportation and the configuration of downtown streets.

"There's a holistic problem and a holistic solution," Fowler said.

If the city took control of College and Providence, which are currently maintained by the Missouri Department of Transportation, Fowler said, the roadways could be redesigned to be more pedestrian-friendly and serve as corridors to downtown and the University of Missouri campus. "To me, these two would be the primary routes for biking and walking to campus," Fowler said.

Brent Gardner, chairman of the leadership council, said although College and Providence are two of the city's most-used thoroughfares and serve as the primary entrances to downtown, they are on the "low-end" of the roadways found within the Columbia city limits in terms of their aesthetic qualities.

"It just appears that College and Providence are two of the least attractive streets in our fair city," Gardner said.

There have been no specific proposals as to which portions of the two roadways should be under city control, but Gardner said the leadership council likely would focus on portions near downtown.

Mike Schupp, MoDOT area engineer, said the department would "absolutely" be receptive to the city to taking over College and Providence. "A lot of times it makes sense for us to get rid of
roads," Schupp said, citing the fact that the department has a shrinking budget and more than 33,000 miles of road to maintain. Schupp said chip sealing the roads costs about $25,000 per mile, and clearing snow from the roads costs about $550 per lane, per mile.

The idea of bringing state-maintained roads into the city's control is not new. Recently, the city and MoDOT agreed to work together to develop Scott Boulevard in west Columbia, which had been a state roadway, under the condition that the department would relinquish control of the roadway to the city after the work was completed.

Bringing portions of College and Providence into the city's control also has been discussed previously. A 2010 planning document prepared by H3 Studio called the downtown charrette report, which the leadership council has used as a set of guidelines for issuing recommendations to the Columbia City Council, calls for developing College and Providence into more pedestrian-friendly streets near downtown.

The report calls for the two thoroughfares to be changed into "urban boulevards" by adding medians, trees and enhancements for pedestrian safety. These boulevards, the report suggests, could serve as gateways into the downtown area.

Fowler mentioned the idea during testimony before the city council at its June 3 regular meeting before the council took a vote on a controversial plan for infrastructure improvements to Providence intersections near the Grasslands neighborhood. Sixth Ward Councilwoman Barbara Hoppe said at the meeting that she would ask for a city staff report weighing the "pros and cons" of the idea.

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ASK A SCIENTIST

Q: How do you make holograms?

By JUSTIN GRAYNER and DEANNA LANKFORD of MU's Office of Science Outreach

Q: How do you make holograms? JUSTIN GRAYNER and DEANNA LANKFORD of MU's Office of Science Outreach The Columbia Daily Tribune

Wednesday, June 26, 2013 at 2:00 pm

Submitted by Jeri Phillips' fifth-grade class at Parkade Elementary School.

Pearl John, a hologram expert from the University of Southampton, explains: "Most people have holograms on their credit cards or driver's license. Holograms are a record of the interaction of two laser beams. They capture a 3-D image." To contrast holograms and photographs, John notes, "Photographs are two-dimensional and record light, dark and color. A hologram can record space within an image, as well.

"If you break a hologram in half, you will see two complete images. A photo could just be cut in half and show half the image on each piece," John says. In fact, no matter how small the piece you cut from the original hologram, it will still contain the whole image.

To make a hologram, you need a laser, a lens, holographic film and a subject. John explains: "To make a hologram, you shine an expanded laser beam through a holographic plate. The light reflecting off the object will reflect back onto the plate, and the interaction of the light hitting directly from the laser beam and the beam from the object produces a microscopic pattern of light and dark, which forms the image when the hologram is lit."

John has spent more than 20 years making holograms and teaching holography. "I started making holograms when I was 15, and I'm still excited when I see a student's face light up when they make their first hologram. I have worked and traveled all over the world talking about and exhibiting my holograms. It's been an amazing adventure."
Western Governors University makes a home in Missouri

Jesse Hall and the columns on the campus of the University of Missouri-Columbia, pictured on July 28, 2010. Photo by Erik M. Lunsford, elunsford@post-dispatch.com

By Tim Barker tbarker@post-dispatch.com 314-340-8350

MU MENTIONS P. 2, 4

It may seem odd that a state with no shortage of public colleges is urging its citizens to consider a private school. Yet that's exactly what Missouri is doing.

In recent months, Gov. Jay Nixon has been featured in a variety of advertisements for Western Governors University, a nonprofit online school that's opening an office in Missouri.

The governor also has issued an executive order directing state agencies to help the school establish its Missouri operation. And to help with startup costs, Missouri is providing a $4 million community development block grant.

That isn't exactly new. After all, Nixon mentioned his interest in the school during his January State of the State speech.

But with Western Governors University Missouri ramping up its presence — the school recently hired a chancellor and is opening an office in St. Louis — people are starting to notice. Some even wonder why
the governor is throwing his support behind a private university that could be seen as a competitor for taxpayer-supported institutions.

Among them is David Bradley, a member of the University of Missouri Board of Curators. During an April meeting, Bradley expressed puzzlement over Nixon's promotion of the school at a time when UM is making its own online push.

"It caught me by surprise," Bradley said in a recent interview. "I don't know if the governor recognizes all that we are doing. We're not sitting on our hands as far as online education."

Indeed, online education is a priority for new UM president Tim Wolfe, said Steven Graham, senior associate vice president for academic affairs for the four-campus system.

It's an emphasis that reflects the ongoing evolution of higher education from the days when online learning was left to niche players. Traditional brick and mortar schools can no longer afford to disregard it.

Last year, there were 28,000 UM students enrolled in at least one online course. That's up 25 percent from the previous year. The system offers 1,400 different courses online and 90 degrees that can be completed without setting foot on a campus.

Graham attributes the growth to a variety of factors, including technological improvements, convenience and the expectations of today's students.

"They've grown up with technology in their hands all the time," Graham said. "It appeals to the way they think. And it appeals to the way they want to learn."

But while Western Governors exclusively targets online learners, Graham questioned whether the school represents a threat to UM's own enrollment.

"We're really not sure what impact WGU will have on us," he said. "But anything that provides more access to students, I think that's a good thing."

Nixon spokesman Scott Holste said Western Governors can help reach students who have fallen through the cracks without threatening existing state programs.

"It's really a supplement to help underserved populations obtain degrees, not a competitor for state schools," Holste said.

DESIGNED BY GOVERNORS

Considering the unique history of Western Governors, it's not surprising that Nixon would be smitten with the school.

It was, after all, created by politicians just like him.
The institution traces its origins to 1995 when a group of governors, from western states, decided to do something about what they saw as weaknesses of the higher education system. They envisioned a nimble online university offering a small number of low-cost degrees directly related to the job demands in their states.

You won’t find Latin, philosophy, fine arts or psychology degrees at Western Governors. Instead, the focus is on specific areas: teaching, business, information technology and health.

“There’s always been a workforce development aspect,” said Robert Mendenhall, who has been president since 1999.

The school opened in 1998 and graduated its first student two years later. Today, WGU has some 40,000 students across the nation. And in recent years, the school has opened state branches in Texas, Indiana, Washington and, now, Missouri.

The school, which already had 450 students in Missouri, figures it needs at least 2,000 students to fund a self-sustaining operation. Plans call for the hiring of 80 professors and staffers within two years.

One of the things that makes the school appealing to Nixon and other political leaders is its break from tradition.

The school uses an unusual competency-based model that pays no attention to the amount of time a student spends in class. A student gains credit for a class by passing an exam. The exam can essentially be taken at any time, meaning a student who already knows the material can gain credit without having to sit through a class.

And with tuition fixed at $2,900 per six-month semester (students take as many courses as they want), the school keeps costs down while allowing for quick graduation for motivated students.

Lower costs, faster graduations and degrees tied to waiting jobs. It's the stuff of dreams for governors faced with declining state revenues and the need to build an educated workforce, said Kevin Kinser, an education professor at the State University of New York at Albany who studies alternative education.

Still, that doesn’t mean public schools like to see their state leaders out there promoting a potential competitor.

“That’s one of the tensions with this model,” Kinser said. “It makes it seem as if the public institutions are doing nothing.”

750,000 REASONS

Missouri, like the rest of the nation, is in the midst of an ambitious effort to boost its percentage of residents with college degrees and certificates. By 2020, the states hopes to see that number rise from 37 percent to 60 percent.
Holste, Nixon's spokesman, said Western Governors can help reach that goal even as the state continues to support more traditional higher education.

He said that the $4 million grant to help offset startup costs is not coming from the state higher education budget. And he said the school is paying for all of its advertising, including the spots featuring Nixon.

One of the things drawing Western Governors to Missouri is an estimated pool of 750,000 residents who started, but never completed college. That is the group WGU makes it living on. And it's the reason traditional schools like the University of Missouri have nothing to fear from competition, said Mendenhall, the school's president.

"These are people who have not been successful in college," he said. "We are a second or third chance for them."

Regardless, there are doubters, including Carole Basile, dean of the college of education at the University of Missouri-St. Louis. She questions the value of the school's teaching degrees.

According to its website, WGU's degrees include 12 to 20 weeks of observed teaching with a local district. Basile said UMSL students spend considerably more time learning the craft of teaching, with 1,300 hours spent in a variety of settings, including classrooms, camps and after-school programs.

And in the end, she's not convinced the state needs another teacher education program, with 38 institutions offering degrees in the field.

"It does make you wonder why we need one more," Basile said.
WASHINGTON — The defeat of the farm bill in the House last week forced Republican leaders to reassess the best way to move forward, having only a handful of largely unpopular choices. The House could vote on the version approved by the House Agriculture Committee in May or strip out some of the controversial food stamp amendments. Lawmakers could take up the bill that passed in the full Senate this month or simply start negotiating with the Senate in conference to craft a final law. These options would further diminish the chamber's depleted negotiating leverage.

Analysts and lobbyists say the most likely outcome will be an extension of the current farm law, despite steadfast opposition from top leaders in the Senate.

"We really want to see a farm bill done this year and have the long-term policy in place, but it's not easy to see how (Speaker John Boehner, R-Ohio) is going to get there," said Ferd Hoefner, policy director at the National Sustainable Agriculture Coalition, which represents small and medium-sized family farms. "The most likely of the options is ... we are going to do an extension."

The arduous process of crafting a five-year, $500 billion farm policy gained momentum early last week as the House, after failing to even bring up the bill for a vote last year, announced it would try to pass the measure. The legislation was supported by Boehner, who had been reluctant to support prior incarnations of the bill.

With little warning, the House bill was soundly defeated, 195-234, as a split among Republicans and opposition by Democrats over massive cuts to the country's food stamp program siphoned off votes. The outcome left farm groups in a state of shock while dealing a major blow to Boehner, who may have lost his best chance to pass a farm bill.

"When they get knocked back like that, it does take a lot of wind out the sails of the speaker, and it's hard for them to corral their members again," said Chad Hart, an associate professor of economics at Iowa State University.

The Senate bill proposed annual cuts of $400 million to food stamps, which are used by about 48 million Americans. The House bill had targeted $2 billion, or about 3% of annual spending for the program.
Conservative Republicans have pushed for steeper cuts. Democrats opposed the House reduction because they feared it would force millions of the country's poor off food stamps.

Lobbyists and analysts following the farm bill process said Boehner's lack of support from his own party—62 GOP members joined 172 Democrats in voting against the legislation last week—does not bode well for the measure going forward. If leaders from both chambers are able to draft a farm bill that the House votes on again, the cuts to food stamps aren't likely to be as sharp, causing even more Republicans to withdraw their support.

"The word is there is a lot of dissension, uncertainty and distrust," said Pat Westhoff, director of the Food and Agricultural Policy Research Institute, a think-tank at the University of Missouri. "People didn't like the way that process happened and aren't terribly confident that they want to engage in the process going forward."

As a result, the path of least resistance would be to extend the farm bill again. At the end of last year, Congress extended the 2008 farm bill through Sept. 30.

Senate Majority Leader Harry Reid, D-Nev., ratcheted up the pressure on the House after he said Monday his chamber would not pass another farm bill extension this year. Debbie Stabenow, D-Mich., the head of the Senate Agriculture Committee, and Chuck Grassley, R-Iowa, have joined the chorus of lawmakers opposed to a short-term fix.

"I don't know how else you're going to keep the pressure on the House to get something done, and I think Stabenow, her position, is leverage in that direction," said Grassley, who said he hasn't given up on the House passing a bill. "The House had better figure out a way of getting a farm bill to conference, so we can get a bill to the president."

The bill covers everything from farm programs to trade and conservation. Without a new law or an extension, a 1949 law would automatically go into effect, curbing plantings and forcing the government to increase subsidy payments by tens of billions of dollars. Dairy programs would be among the first to take a hit. Commodity prices paid to farmers would nearly double, and consumers would pay more for milk. Wheat and other commodities would be impacted soon after.

Farm groups have expressed growing frustration over the inability of Congress to complete a farm bill. Kevin Scott, a farmer from Valley Springs, S.D., said he was optimistic Congress would reach a deal on the farm bill before the 1949 law went into effect. Regardless of the outcome, he said, he would not let the uncertainty coming from Washington change the way he runs his 2,300-acre corn and soybean farm.

"The farm bill is just a small part of what we do. There will still be buyers. Cattle, hogs and chickens, they all have to eat soybeans or corn," Scott said. "The market will go on, and we'll be fine. But it would be nice if our legislative leadership recognized that some of the business decisions we make are tied to what happens in the farm programs."
New Mo. chief justice prepares to lead judiciary

The incoming leader of the Missouri judiciary grew up on a family dairy farm near Hannibal where she drove tractors, stacked hay, helped ready cows for milking and worked in the garden. She now is poised to become the Missouri chief justice after starting law school thinking she did not want to practice in the courtroom.

Judge Mary Russell said Wednesday she is honored and humbled and described herself as "an ordinary person in an extraordinary position." Beginning next week, Russell will lead the seven-member Missouri Supreme Court for two years, presenting a proposed budget to the Legislature and likely giving a speech about the judiciary during a joint legislative session.

Members of the high court select the chief justice, and the position has rotated among the judges. Russell succeeds current Chief Justice Richard Teitelman who will remain on the court. Teitelman said in a statement Wednesday he will continue to support efforts to ensure the poor have adequate legal representation and is confident Russell will be an effective leader.

"I have been humbled to have served the wonderful people of our state for the past two years as Missouri's chief justice," Teitelman said. "One beauty of our system in Missouri is that, while each of us has the opportunity to serve a two-year term as chief justice, we always work as part of a team of seven individuals."

Russell, 54, was appointed to the Supreme Court in 2004 by Democratic Gov. Bob Holden. She was a judge in the Court of Appeals' Eastern District from 1995 to 2004 and served as chief judge from 1999 to 2000. Russell was clerk from 1983 to 1984 for state Supreme Court Judge George Gunn.

_before her legal career, Russell was interested in journalism. She has degrees in communications and print media from Truman State University and wanted to do consumer affairs reporting. However, she enjoyed covering trials for the Hannibal Courier-Post. When she started law school at the University of Missouri-Columbia, she did not want to practice in the courtroom because she did not have confidence in her ability for public speaking, thinking on her feet and serving as a good advocate for clients._
Now as chief justice, Russell wants to concentrate on civics education to teach about how government operates and the rights and responsibilities within the Constitution. She also wants to continue to expand electronic filing, make sure there is support for specialty courts such as veterans and drug treatment courts and examine public opinion about Missouri’s court system. She plans surveys of people leaving courthouses and said she has discussed the concept with the next two in line to serve as chief justice and hopes to keep it going.

"We're always interested in improving and seeing how we can do our jobs better," Russell said. "We will look at both the metropolitan areas and the rural areas and see if maybe there are problems unique to those particular types of courts."

Russell's experience within state government extends beyond the courthouse. She has worked in the communications office for the Missouri Senate and in the Senate president pro tem's office. In 1991, she was a Democratic member of the Senate Reapportionment Commission that was responsible for redrawing state Senate districts based upon the 1990 census.

Russell is married to Jim Russell, who is a lobbyist that has represented the Missouri Agribusiness Association.

Speaking to reporters Wednesday in the same courtroom where the Supreme Court conducts oral arguments, Russell said the high court judges are apolitical and get along well. She declined to categorize her judicial philosophy.

"I don't like labels. I look at each case based upon the law, based upon the facts," Russell said. "I don't think of myself as any particular category."

Last summer, Russell wrote the dissenting opinion when the Missouri Supreme Court struck down an important piece of Republicans' effort to curb liability lawsuits by capping noneconomic damages for issues such as pain and suffering in medical practice cases. The court ruled that a limit on damages restricted the jury's fact-finding role and violated the right to trial by jury. Russell wrote in her dissent that the ruling "reflects a wholesale departure from the unequivocal law of this state and leaps into a new era of law." She said the right to a jury trial can be met when a jury awards damages and a judge latter applies a law capping those damages.
A senator who has been instrumental in the fight for open government warned Wednesday that the government's practice of "vacuuming up the phone records of millions of law-abiding Americans" puts citizens' privacy at risk.

During a panel sponsored by the American Society of News Editors, Sen. Ron Wyden, D-Ore., said while the information collected by the National Security Agency involves phone numbers, location and time of the call, it might also contain vital personal details, such as relationships, medical issues, religious matters or political affiliations.

"I have to believe the civil liberties of millions of Americans have been violated," Wyden said.

"I have not seen any evidence that demonstrates that the bulk collection of all of these records provides unique value," he added.

Wyden said he believes that the information the NSA gathers could be obtained by emergency authorization or court order and does not need to be collected automatically from millions of Americans in bulk.

"The fact is that vacuuming up the phone records of millions of law-abiding Americans can really determine and reveal a lot of private information," he said.

The Sunshine in Government Initiative, a group of nine media organizations including the ASNE, presented its annual award to Wyden for his work in stripping several provisions from the Fiscal Year 2012 Intelligence Authorization Act that would have significantly lessened reporters' ability to access even unclassified information.

One provision particular was a provision that would have prevented intelligence committee officials from becoming paid news commentators for at least a year after leaving public service.
"You could basically only have a handful of people who were designated as the ones legally allowed to talk to the press," said Wyden of the provision he worked to strike down. "They (reporters) could only get one side of the story and basically only the side that the high-level people want you to have. That's not transparency, that's not the public's right to know," he said.

Government employees Tim Crawford and Larry Gottesman were honored by the Sunshine in Government Initiative for creating FOIAonline, a system that allows the public to manage and track Freedom of Information requests.

In addition to the awards, ASNE also released its annual Newsroom Employment Census results, reporting that total newsroom employment in 2012 declined by 6.4 percent while the proportion of racial minorities remained steady at 12.37 percent. The census, collected by ASNE in conjunction with the University of Missouri, stated that there were about 38,000 full-time daily newspaper journalists at nearly 1,400 newspapers in the U.S. last year, and 4,700 of those journalists were racial minorities.
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