Retiring MU Chancellor Deaton's institute will address global issues campuswide

By T.J. Thomson, Molly Duffy
October 30, 2013 | 1:37 p.m. CDT

MU Chancellor Brady Deaton will soon trade his office in Jesse Hall for one in Ellis Library.

From the new office in 104 Ellis, Deaton, with his wife, Anne, will lead the Brady and Anne Deaton Institute for University Leadership in International Development.

He'll take about a month and a half off before starting with the institute on Jan. 1, Brady Deaton said at a Wednesday morning news conference, the last scheduled one before his Nov.
15 retirement as chancellor. Deaton said he'll spend a lot of time traveling and asking colleagues for advice.

"We have only scoped out a plan of work — I want to visit the other campuses in the UM System to make sure I'm aware of what they're doing and how we can work together to enable the entire university to move forward," he said.

After 46 years of marriage, Brady and Anne share more than a residence — most recently, the Chancellor's Residence on Francis Quadrangle. They share a sensitivity to global issues such as food security, water safety and environmental sustainability, which they hope to address at the institute, according to a June Mizzou News article.

"I will be functioning there, and my wife, Anne, will be involved with components of that," Deaton said. "We hope to elicit support and involvement from very many faculty and graduate students and undergraduates here at the university."

As chancellor, Brady Deaton made $337,488.36 for the 2012-13 year. He will be paid $200,000 annually for his work at the institute, said Betsy Rodriguez, University of Missouri System vice president for human resources. Anne Deaton said Wednesday that, at this point, she wouldn't be drawing a salary for her involvement.

"There's no salary for myself," Anne Deaton said. "We've worked as a team. Our interests in development are very mutual."

Missourian reporters Molly Duffy and T.J. Thomson are working on coverage of the chancellor's retirement. We welcome your thoughts and memories of the Deatons and their time in the Chancellor's Residence. Send them to submissions@ColumbiaMissourian.com.

Supervising editor is Elizabeth Brixey.
The Education Department on Wednesday asked for the public's help to develop a new ratings system for America's colleges and universities.

It announced a series of public forums next month in California, Virginia, Iowa and Louisiana, with the goal of having a draft system ready by next fall. By 2018, the plan is to tie some financial aid to schools based on performance using the system.

The ratings system, sought by President Barack Obama, is designed to provide students with more information about schools and help rein in the rising cost of college and make institutions of higher learning more accountable in areas such graduation rates.

Members of the higher education community have questioned whether it is the federal government's job to create such a system and whether it would be fair. For example, if graduates' salaries are factored in, they worry that a school with lower-paid graduates in fields such as social work or with a high number of stay-at-home parents could be unfairly judged.

Education Secretary Arne Duncan told reporters on a conference call that it's too early to know exactly what metrics will be used to develop the system, but that it will be thoughtfully done. He said the federal government spends $150 billion annually on grants and loans, none of which is based on outcome.

"Quite candidly, that's been the problem," Duncan said.

Earlier Wednesday, Purdue University President Mitch Daniels, a former governor of Indiana, told reporters that he's "very skeptical" of the federal government putting together such a system. He said that's better left to the marketplace.

Already, Daniels said, students and their families are realizing that high tuition costs don't necessarily mean those are the best schools, and employers are questioning the value of diplomas from some institutions _ the type of factors that are driving conversations about college value.

"There's going to be a move to accountability," Daniels said, whether it's the federal government doing it or not.

The Education Department forums are scheduled Nov. 6 at California State University, Dominguez Hills; Nov. 13 at George Mason University in Fairfax, Va.; Nov. 15 at the University of Northern Iowa in Cedar Falls; and Nov. 21 at Louisiana State University in Baton Rouge.
MU ROTC to induct five into hall of fame

Wednesday, October 30, 2013 at 2:00 pm

The University of Missouri Army Reserve Officer Training Corps Hall of Fame is hosting an induction ceremony at 10 a.m. Saturday in front of Crowder Hall on the MU campus.

The Hall of Fame was established to recognize alumni, staff and supporters of the MU ROTC program. The 2013 inductees are:

Brig. Gen. Randy Alewel, a 1983 graduate of the program who is now Missouri Army National Guard land component commander; retired Col. Russell Shelden, a 1942 graduate of the program who served in World War II; retired Col. Larry Matthews, a 1971 graduate of the program who served more than 30 years on active duty; Capt. Roy Gray, a 1953 graduate of the program who was killed in Vietnam in 1970; and Command Sgt. Maj. Kevin Griffin, a former senior military science instructor in the program who was killed in action in Afghanistan last year.

Alewel, Shelden and Matthews will be in attendance at the ceremony along with the widows of Gray and Griffin.

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Posted in Local, Education on Wednesday, October 30, 2013 2:00 pm.
Changes at hospitals dramatically increase breast-feeding rates

When Sarah Sidwell gave birth to her son five years ago by Cesarean section at Barnes-Jewish Hospital, she briefly peeked at him before he was taken away “for what felt like hours” to get bathed, tested and warmed in blankets.

But this month, after Sidwell gave birth to her daughter by C-section at the same hospital, her baby was placed immediately on her chest, and baby Lena stayed there for next hour and a half.

“The cool thing was she was screaming bloody murder, but the second she was on me, she was instantly quiet,” said Sidwell, 35, of St. Louis. As Sidwell’s incision was being stitched and with the help of her husband and a nurse, Lena began nursing right away.

Placing babies on mom’s chest immediately after birth – even on the operating table – is one of many changes that in just one year have led to dramatic increases in breast-feeding rates at Barnes-Jewish Hospital and other hospitals across the country.

Barnes-Jewish is one of 89 hospitals taking part in a national initiative called Best Fed Beginnings, which calls for significant changes in how mothers and babies are cared for.

ONE YEAR LATER

The $6 million federally funded initiative got under way more than a year ago, and the rate of mothers exclusively breast-feeding when discharged from Barnes-Jewish has gone from 18 to 44 percent. Among all the participating hospitals, that rate has gone from 39 to 56 percent, with all three regions across the country seeing big boosts.

“I don’t think we knew what was possible when we started this,” said Jennifer Ustianov, director of Best Fed Beginnings for the National Initiative for Children’s Healthcare Quality. “We haven’t had this large enough of an initiative that is this geographically dispersed with hospitals serving such diverse populations.”

The hospitals must complete 10 steps that international health organizations have determined will provide optimal support for mothers wanting to breast-feed. The 89 hospitals, together responsible for more than 275,000 births each year, were selected in states with the lowest breast-feeding rates and highest rates of supplementation during the hospital stay.

Other hospitals in Missouri include Truman Medical Center-Hospital Hill in Kansas City and the University of Missouri Women’s and Children’s Hospital in Columbia. They also boasted big jumps in their exclusive breast-feeding rates: Truman went from 42 to 73 percent; and Women
and Children’s, even after having already worked the past four years on improving rates, went from about 70 to 82 percent.

Pediatricians recommend exclusive breast-feeding for the first six months to get all the health benefits. Yet in the U.S., only a fraction of moms meet that goal, according to this year’s federal Breast-feeding Report Card. Missouri is slightly below the national average, with only 15.7 percent of 6-month-olds exclusively breast-feeding.

Rates are lowest among impoverished and African-American mothers, which make up a majority of births at Barnes-Jewish.

‘TURNING THE TITANIC’

The hospital stay is critical to success. One thing that can sabotage a woman’s effort to breast-feed is supplementing with formula, said Dr. Courtney Barnes, an obstetrician at Women’s and Children’s, which changes the makeup of the baby’s gut and inhibits mom’s production of milk.

“The thing we’ve seen the greatest success in is formula supplementation,” Barnes said. “We’ve gone from a 40 percent supplementation rate to 18 percent, and that is tremendous.”

The changes the hospital must make include no longer accepting free formula, keeping babies out of the nursery and in mothers’ rooms, not giving pacifiers to breast-feeding babies and training all health-care staff – which can be 100 to 200 people – how to support breast-feeding.

“It’s like turning the Titanic around,” said Beth Sevart, lactation consultant and leader of the initiative team at the Kansas City hospital. “It’s a big change to the whole system, to the way we’ve been doing things.”

For example, keeping babies and moms together requires encouraging pediatricians – who are used to bringing their patients into the nursery to do exams one after another – to visit each baby in their rooms. It requires researchers to bring moms along with their babies for tests. And nurses used to assessing babies in an open-bed warmer have to learn to do so on a mother’s chest. With each change, a stalwart requires convincing.

“From the outside looking in, it’s like, ‘What’s the big deal?’ But it’s actually a huge change in practice,” Ustianov said. “It changes the culture.”

CONTACT IS BEST

The participating hospitals hold regional meetings to learn from one another. The possibility of putting babies skin-to-skin in the operating room was born in these meetings.

Skin-to-skin contact immediately after birth has been shown to better stabilize the baby’s temperature, heart rate, breathing and blood sugar. The baby is alert and instinctively searches for the breast and is more likely to latch on well and nurse longer, meaning less soreness and better milk supply for moms.

While skin-to-skin contact is becoming more routine with vaginal births, doing so immediately after C-sections – which account for 1 in 3 births – is a new concept for the surgeons, anesthesiologists and nurses involved.
Barnes-Jewish began placing babies skin-to-skin in the operating room in February, said Dr. Camaryn Chrisman Robbins, an obstetrician at Barnes-Jewish helping lead the Best Fed Beginnings initiative. Already, 38 percent of babies born via C-section are immediately placed on their mothers’ chests if both are healthy and stable.

“We’re offering Cesarean delivery moms a very different birth experience than we ever have,” Robbins said.

Sidwell said she was excited when nurses explained before her C-section how they would immediately tuck her baby girl under her surgical gown. “My husband thought it sounded like something a bunch of hippies made up, but when he saw it in action, it was really amazing,” she said. “He couldn’t believe how calm she was right away.”

Sidwell was able to nurse Lena easily, whereas last time with her son, he was very hungry by the time she finally got to hold him. They both ended up frustrated, she said.

Women’s and Children’s began doing skin-to-skin in the operating room about a year ago with planned C-sections, Barnes said. Starting Friday, the hospital will place babies skin-to-skin for all C-sections.

“The response has been so positive regardless of feeding choice,” Barnes said. “Even mothers who are not breast-feeding enjoy being together and bonding with their infant. It is one that is universally liked.”

The operating room staff began the practice last month at Truman Medical Center, Sevart said. “The staff loves it because they see how happy moms are.”

ALL MOMS BENEFIT

Many of the changes are beneficial for moms and babies who are not breast-feeding.

Sidwell said she enjoyed watching her son help give Lena her first bath in their room. She quickly learned her cues for hunger by keeping Lena by her side. She got more practice at swaddling.

“This birth with her was truly different. You felt more involved as a mother, that it revolved around you and your baby whereas with him, it was more about making things easier for the doctors and nurses.”

At the end of the two-year initiative, the hospitals will be assessed to see if they’ve met the 10 requirements. If they do, they earn the designation as a Baby-Friendly Hospital. Only 168 hospitals and birthing centers in the country are Baby-Friendly, including Hannibal Regional Hospital, the only one in Missouri.

With just 7 percent of U.S. babies born in Baby-Friendly hospitals, the Best Fed Beginnings initiative will more than double the number of babies born in hospitals that fully support breast-feeding.

“It’s snowballing now,” Chrisman Robbins said. “I think we are going to see things change fast from here on out.”
Achieve Program provides education majors with hands-on experience

By Aaron Reiss

It started with data.

Three years ago, Associate Professor of Education Stephen Whitney was studying the scores of elementary school students on the Missouri Assessment Program examination. Whitney was looking for a school with a low or nonexistent achievement gap.

He found four schools and invited teachers and administrators from each school to come to Columbia and discuss the strategies that lead to their success.

The answer was attention. Whitney believed he could help close to the achievement gap in Columbia schools by providing struggling students with individualized attention.

“We have these wonderful MU students who I know can do more than what we were asking of them in their field placements,” Whitney said. “And I said, ‘Let’s put these two together and give the teachers the help they need within the classroom time.’”

So far, it appears Whitney’s guess was a good one. The Achieve Program, which pairs one or two sophomore education students with a struggling elementary or middle school student, is working to close the achievement gap while providing MU students with hands-on experience.

Education students participate in the Achieve Program by taking two classes, one per semester: Whitney’s Inquiry to Learning course and Assistant Professor of Education Tony Castro’s Inquiry into Schools, Communities and Society course.

Each class has a field component. Castro agreed to pair his class with Whitney’s, allowing students to participate in the Achieve Program for a full year.

“I instantly fell in love with the program,” Castro said. “It was a great idea — really organizing the way for our young people, for our students to get experience in the community with kids that need support. It was a win-win for everybody.”

The elementary or middle school students are recommended for the program by their teacher and are then paired with either one or two MU students.

Junior Brittany Rich, who switched her major to education last year, said her Achieve Program student is making strides.
“Even though most of the assignments we’re doing are two days late because (the girl I tutor) doesn’t do them (on time), she’s still doing them with me,” Rich said. “So that’s really rewarding to know that there is something going on there.”

Whitney does not attribute the success of the elementary and middle school students in the Achieve Program solely to the program. There are other tutoring programs going on at the schools at the same time, he said.

Whitney and Castro said they believe the program makes a difference, and what makes it special, in their eyes, is the hands-on experience it offers education majors.

“They can develop more self-efficacy as a teacher,” Whitney said. “(The MU preservice teachers start thinking), ‘I can affect the lives of these kids. I can change their trajectories. I can get them going.’”

Castro said his students call the Achieve Program one of the best experiences of their college careers.

Rich said she appreciates the relationship that constant interaction with students fosters.

“(It) kind of (gives you) a stronger reason or an understanding of why you want to (go into education) because you’re getting more time with the students,” Rich said. “You can’t just let these students down. You can’t just not show up.”

The Achieve Program recently received a grant from a local State Farm Insurance Agency office. It will allow Whitney to continue to monitor the program.

The Achieve Program began at Fairview Elementary School three years ago. It now extends to Russell Boulevard Elementary School and West Middle School as well.

Whitney said he’s thinking about expanding the program beyond education majors, giving other students a chance to learn from the hands-on experience.

Whitney said he isn’t sure how to get to that point of expansion yet, but he is sure of one thing: The Achieve Program isn’t going anywhere.

“I’ll do it for as long as it’s a benefit to the teachers and the schools,” Whitney said.
SECOND THOUGHTS

Wednesday, October 30, 2013 at 2:00 pm

A Saturday story about the new risk management and insurance program at the University of Missouri Trulaske College of Business incorrectly paraphrased an emailed statement from Dean Joan Gabel. The story should have said Gabel said employers in the field offer three-dimensional career paths for students.

A story Tuesday about the anniversary of the sister city relationship between Columbia and Hakusan, Japan, quoted Sixth Ward Councilwoman Barbara Hoppe as saying Hosokawa Kumeo, mayor of Matto City, Japan, arranged to have cherry blossom trees planted at Columbia’s Cosmo Park in 1973. She misspoke. Renee Graham, public communications manager for the city, said the first cherry blossom tree was planted at Martin Luther King Jr. Memorial off Stadium Boulevard in 1993. The grove at Cosmo Park was planted in 1995.

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Posted in Second Thoughts on Wednesday, October 30, 2013 2:00 pm.
ASK A SCIENTIST Q: What do spiders use to make their webs?

Wednesday, October 30, 2013 at 2:00 pm

This question was provided by Ms. Crowley's third-grade class at Shepard Boulevard Elementary School

A: University of Missouri Professor Emeritus of biological sciences and arthropod expert James Carrel notes, "Spiders produce silk from glands within their abdomen." Spiders use silk for multiple purposes, including building webs. Spider webs are designed to trap prey, be it flying or crawling insects. Carrel explains, "Once the prey is trapped in the web, the spider may wrap the prey in silk to immobilize it and next bite the prey. Because spiders are liquid feeders, their bite injects digestive juices into the body of the prey, and spiders later draw the digested material out of the prey."

Spiders use silk for purposes other than webs. Carrel says, "Spiders wrap their eggs in silk to protect them; a spider egg case is covered in tough silk, which is not sticky. There may be many eggs placed within the egg case and protected from environmental conditions like moisture." Look carefully around your yard, and you might find spider egg sacks hanging from branches.

Spiders also use silk as a means of transportation. Tiny spiders produce long strands of silk, which are caught by the wind and actually carry the spider long distances. This is called ballooning.

Carrel reminds us that spiders are amazing organisms capable of producing a very strong substance known as silk. Spider silk is similar to the silk produced by silk worms. Spider silk is very strong and has many uses. Look for these amazing creatures and the incredible webs they build.

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