Federal aid director touts U.S. innovation

MU is involved in Feed the Future.

By Karyn Spory

Friday, November 15, 2013 at 2:00 pm

Rajiv Shah, top official for a federal international aid agency, told a Columbia audience Thursday the United States is strongest and most capable when it uses innovation.

Shah, administrator of the U.S. Agency for International Development, spoke about American innovation in a global economy during the Bond Lecture Series in the Bond Life Sciences Center on the University of Missouri campus.

During his speech, Shah announced MU would become a part of that innovation with participation in USAID's Feed the Future program. The program involves labs that draw on the expertise of universities and research institutions to tackle challenges in agriculture and food security in developing countries.

Shah said Feed the Future, which was created in 2009, has helped 7 million farmers in more than 19 countries improve their crop yields.

Shah said a coalition that includes MU and the University of Illinois will work on climate-resilient soybeans to increase the food supply in five sub-Saharan African countries. "We're excited to see new products and technologies come out from the partnership and reach our beneficiary farmers in places like Ethiopia, Zambia, Ghana, Malawi and Mozambique" in Africa, he said.

The research consortium, dubbed Feed the Future Innovation Laboratory for Soybean Value Chain Research, received a five-year, $25 million grant from USAID.

In an interview earlier this week, Shah said MU was included in the consortium because it is "an incredible example of a college that brings not just agricultural science, but also this project will rely on the university's use of social network analysis and will involve the health communication research sector and the school of journalism to help design strategies so we can get all these very low-income farmers, most of whom are women, in rural parts of Africa to actually be aware or and connected to the opportunities that exist to help them out of poverty."
During his speech, Shah also touched on the typhoon that hit the Philippines last week. Shah said although the full toll of the destruction is not yet clear, USAID knows more than 1,800 people have been confirmed dead and nearly 150,000 homes destroyed.

"We know the human cost of this is immeasurable and completely tragic, and we know the United States … is leading an international response with more than $20 million in immediate humanitarian assistance already at work," he said.

Sen. Kit Bond said USAID doesn't get the glory it deserves, but it does provide an important component of U.S. foreign policy and security policy.

"It's the chief way the U.S. government provides humanitarian aid to people in need throughout the world," Bond said.
Potential ACA rules affect grad students

Faculty warned of 30-hour limit.

By Karyn Spory

Friday, November 15, 2013 at 2:00 pm

Graduate students throughout the University of Missouri System reside in a murky area when it comes to compliance with the federal Affordable Care Act, Betsy Rodriguez of the UM human resources office told MU faculty council representatives Thursday.

Rodriguez, system vice president for human resources, said the ACA does not allow for different eligibility treatment for student employees. Because graduate students receive a paycheck from the university, she said, whether it is a stipend or similar incentive, the IRS and Department of Labor regard them as employees and not students.

"But some of their hours are going to be under dissertation or thesis research, so it's course credit, not for pay," said Francisco Gomez, associate professor of geology.

Rodriguez said the government "doesn't understand graduate students … when they are working and when they are doing their own research."

She said course credit would be easy to document, but the rest would not. "If a graduate student walks into the Department of Labor and says their faculty member worked them way more than 20 hours and never offered them health insurance … you can see my concern," she said.

Rodriguez said faculty will not have to keep track of graduate student hours for now, but that might change. She said the UM system is required to track all employees who are not full-time and eligible for full benefits but who might be eligible for medical benefit. Those include variable-hour employees who average 30 hours per week or more over the course of a fiscal year. Graduate students potentially fit in that category.

The system has one year to become compliant with new ACA regulations; after that, the penalty for a mistake could be as much as $39 million. "We can't afford to get this wrong," she said.

Rodriguez also talked about rehiring retirees. She said the system had to make changes to the retirement plan after recent rulings by the IRS. If an employee who retires is older than 62, nothing changes and the employee would be allowed to negotiate part-time work before
retirement up to 74 percent of full time. She said the university would set the limit at 70 percent to ensure compliance.

If a faculty or staff member younger than 62retires, however, to receive the benefits under the pension plan the retiree cannot discuss working part-time with administrators before retirement, must have a 90-day break in service and must go through the competitive selection process or sign a document saying he or she understands the rules.

"That's just to protect you, because you don't want the IRS questioning whether you were eligible to receive your benefits," Rodriguez said.
Public can weigh in on plan to control College Avenue pedestrian traffic

Friday, November 15, 2013 | 9:38 p.m. CST; updated 9:31 a.m. CST, Saturday, November 16, 2013

BY EMILY DONALDSON

COLUMBIA — In an attempt to control the persistent flow of illegal pedestrian traffic across College Avenue, the city and the university are ready to propose a solution.

They are asking for public comment at a meeting Tuesday on a plan that would channel foot traffic into conspicuous crosswalks with minimal motorist delays.

At a city hall forum Tuesday from 4 to 7 p.m., the City Engineering Division will outline a traffic study done on the stretch of road between University Avenue and Bouchelle Avenue, where the majority of illegal crossings occur.

City engineers will also describe a series of possible solutions, including these:

- Crosswalks with colored or textured pavement and prominent vertical elements that would help funnel the traffic.

- Flashing signals that would respond to a high volume of pedestrian traffic to stop and start motorist traffic.

- Hang tags for East Campus streets to alleviate the number of crossings from that side of College Avenue to campus walkways.

- Another pedestrian bridge over College Avenue, which would be a less likely solution because of the expense and lack of available property.

For the past year, professional traffic operations engineers have been studying the area from University to Bouchelle. They estimated that 19,000 vehicles pass through the area each day and counted 7,500 pedestrians crossing the road over the span of two days.
Of these pedestrians, 5,000 did not cross at the light.

The city and university are acting as partners on the project. Eighty percent of funding will come from a Missouri Department of Transportation grant, 10 percent from MU and the final 10 percent from the City of Columbia. The stretch of College Avenue between Rollins Street and Hospital Drive has long been problematic. The pedestrian bridge near the intersection of College and Rollins alleviated some, but not all, of the problem.

After Tuesday’s meeting, additional forums and online discussions will be held before final design recommendation is submitted to City Council.
Editorial: Columbia and MU need a unified master plan for growth

We need to talk.

All of us, really. Because if our university is going to continue its current trajectory of constantly increasing enrollment, and if the city we live in is going to continue its current trajectory of constantly increasing population, the growing pains we’re all dealing with will only worsen and multiply. Unless we do some serious talking.

It needs to go beyond talking, too. It needs to be focused, decisive planning, involving some very tough choices about what we desire our university and our city to be and how we want it to function. Growth is almost inevitable, and progress must be encouraged, but to truly operate in the mutual benefit of everyone, it must be methodical, proactive, perceptive and smart.

To examine MU’s growing pains, it’s easiest to start at the root. The University of Missouri is, year after year, accepting more undergraduates. That may be due principally to the declining funds coming from the Statehouse; it may be due in part to administrators’ desire to become a more “inclusive” university; but regardless, it’s an inescapable reality here.

From increasing enrollment comes a variety of effects, some of which can be solved relatively easily and some of which pose much larger problems.

Increased enrollment increases demand for on-campus housing. The yearly influx of record or near-record freshman classes has forced Residential Life to build several new halls and convert study rooms into bedrooms — but even then, some freshmen have to live off-campus and many upperclassmen who desire to live on campus are unable.

Increased enrollment increases demand for off-campus housing. Right now, this growth has taken the route of sprawling far from campus, mostly in the Grindstone area. “Luxury” is the buzzword, tossed around at complexes with superfluous amenities (golf simulator, anyone?) often to conceal cheaply built apartments.
Students are often faced with choosing between housing that is close to campus, housing that is comfortable and safe or housing that is affordable. These three qualities are rarely found together. The off-campus housing expansion could also take the route of building up, as with a proposed 24-story housing complex where Bengals Bar & Grill and Casablanca Mediterranean Grill are currently located; this option seems to run into opposition from Columbia locals and those who prefer a city free of high-rises.

**Increased enrollment increases demand for university facilities.** The new Student Center is pristine and spacious, and so is the MU Student Recreation Complex, but many of MU’s academic buildings are crumbling. Money for facilities is extremely tight at present, particularly in the College of Arts and Science, which just secured the ability to charge additional fees for its courses (becoming the last college to be able to do so) to help increase revenue in the absence of university tuition hikes.

MU is in the process of moving the Museum of Art and Archaeology to Mizzou North, the former site of Ellis Fischel Cancer Center nearly a mile north of campus. Surely, some classes will eventually be moved there as well. What MU needs is to rebuild many campus buildings to increase occupancy, but is that possible given its current budgets?

**Increased enrollment increases demand for course offerings.** Students might have more difficulty enrolling in courses they want or need, due to the increased enrollment and competition. To solve this, Faculty Council is considering expanding the hours of the day when courses may be offered; this also often means hiring more adjunct faculty and lecturers. Having more non-tenure-track faculty threatens to dilute the “strength” of the university’s faculty itself. Tenured faculty are more expensive to hire and spend less time teaching than those hired solely to teach, it’s true — but they provide more value, expertise, accomplishments and prestige (and don’t forget research grants) to the university.

Taken together, these major problems caused by increased enrollment — and that’s not even including smaller issues such as parking and dining-hall space — present a range of long-term challenges to MU. And university administrators are indeed working to address them — currently, through the strategic plan of “One Mizzou: 2020 Vision for Excellence” for the larger university, and the Residential Life Master Plan specifically for university housing. But neither plan addresses a crucial factor and massive set of stakeholders in MU’s growth and progress: the city of Columbia and its residents.
So we have an expanding university within an expanding Columbia. This creates massive tensions, particularly with the issue of off-campus housing.

We witnessed this last year with the saga of the Niedermeyer house. An outside developer wanted to buy the property at Tenth and Cherry streets, raze downtown Columbia’s oldest house and build a student-apartment high-rise. Sustained public outcry over the historic building led to an MU professor purchasing the property to save it from demolition.

What happened next? The same developer, Collegiate Housing Partners, moved their plans southwestward. In July, City Council approved rezoning to allow the developer to build a six-story apartment building at Fifth Street and Conley Avenue, just south of Mark Twain Hall. Along with that, now development firm Park 7 Group is pursuing the aforementioned 24-story complex on the Bengals site.

These developments are not coming for no reason; they are directly due to the expansion of the MU student body. The city of Columbia and MU cannot act blindly to the reality that high-rise projects will continue to be proposed north of campus. Take The Lofts at 308 Ninth, the five-story luxury student apartment building. It opened this fall; now, the same developer is seeking to purchase the adjacent property, demolish its apartments lovingly known as the “J-slums,” and build another luxury apartment complex. Are you surprised?

Lack of anticipation for these obvious patterns and progressions are resulting in the continued advancement of developers’ interests in Columbia without a proactive growth plan from the city and its residents or the university and its leaders. This means that housing rates go up for everyone and much of the area’s charm and character is threatened while historical-preservation buffs play “whack-a-mole” with each new high-rise building proposed.

With the arrival of Chancellor Brady Deaton’s successor, and with the city and its residents currently working on the ambitious, comprehensive Columbia Imagined plan to establish a common strategy for the future of Columbia, this is the perfect time to rethink how this university will grow. MU, Columbia and its other two higher-education institutions need a large, inclusive discussion on our common future, and then we need to establish a unified master plan about it.

It must begin with the reality of expanding enrollment and expanding population and progress from there. It must address questions such as whether we want to have off-campus housing build outward or built upward. It must consider the value of preserving Columbia’s character
and historic appeal. It must include all stakeholders — and, let’s be clear, there are plenty of them. Because in the end, we really shouldn’t be growing and expanding unless we’re all on the same page as to why we’re doing so.

Let’s start talking.
Housing in Columbia expands; many factors affect the development of city

By Maggie Stanwood

Two new student housing complexes will come to Columbia in the next year, built by Park 7 Group and American Campus Communities.

Park 7 Group, a New York-based company, is looking at the property where Bengals Bar & Grill and Casablanca Mediterranean Grill reside. American Campus Communities has looked at areas near the west side of campus.

“I mean there are different angles to think about it,” Historic Preservation Commission representative Brent Gardner said. “Obviously, it will be newer, nicer, and I’m sure they’ll charge a lot more for it. I think the location is perfect for a residential student housing to be built. I think it’s as perfect as a location as you can get.”

Population growth in Columbia sparks new developments

Because downtown is so old, Gardner said he is concerned how adding people will affect the older infrastructure in the area.

“There’s going to be so much new housing downtown that I’m a little concerned with the infrastructure of the city being able to handle it, like the plumbing and the sewer and the water and the electric,” Gardner said.

MU and Columbia go hand in hand into the future, Off-Campus Student Services coordinator Dionne George said.

“The University of Missouri is obviously the economic engine for Columbia, so as goes MU so goes Columbia,” Gardner said.

Luxury student complexes are popping up in large college towns all over the nation, George said.

“A lot of these same companies are at other SEC schools and other large institutions,” George said. “Missouri is really on the back end of that effect, if that makes any sense. What is happening here now has already happened in other locations.”
Increase in students enrolled at MU creates need for more housing

Aspen Heights spokesman Stuart Watkins said student housing is necessary, given MU’s large student body.

“Mizzou is a very prestigious university,” Watkins said. “When you look at the academic programs that are offered, they’re some of the finest in the country and enrollment is continuing to grow. When you have a very impressive state school, it’s always going to attract top students from across the country.”

While rent can be expensive, it depends on what is included in the price, freshman Kaley Johnson said.

“While the cost of living is never exactly cheap, the cost at The Reserve is very reasonable and manageable,” Johnson said. “All utilities except electric are also included in the price, so rent will be relatively consistent throughout the year, which is important for financial planning.”

While rent can be expensive, it’s not that difficult to take care of, sophomore Emily Jaeger said.

“(Rent) hasn’t been affecting us a whole lot,” Jager said. “It’s only once a month and it takes ten minutes. I have three roommates who pay me and then I pay the big bill, so it takes coordination and communication but it’s not a huge issue.”

In 2030, Columbia’s population is expected to be between 132,000 and 146,000 people, but the growth of MU will slow, Columbia Development Services Manager Pat Zenner said.

“What we have is a lot of student housing out there that’s going to complete its cycle at this point for construction and then it might sit, probably for years within the city of Columbia prior to this more aggressive building we’ve seen over the last two, three years,” Zenner said.

With a higher population, crime will not necessarily rise, Columbia Police Department spokesman Joe Bernhard said.

“I would say in general we have more parking complaints, more peace disturbance and theft/burglary in densely populated areas,” Bernhard said. “Increase in population does necessarily have to mean an increase in crime rates.”

Crime rates have not significantly differed in the last 20 years, though calls for the police are at an all-time high, Bernhard said.

Columbia will continue to be historic and development will boom; it doesn’t have to be one or the other, George said.

“It may turn out to be half and half,” George said. “I think development is necessary. It offers jobs, it affects the real estate, and it will affect the economy.”
There is a reason the population of Columbia and housing is increasing, Gardner said.

“Things start to happen once you get to be a certain population,” Gardner said. “So I think there will be twice as many people living here in 20 years. It’s also located between Kansas City and St. Louis, so it’s a pretty prime location for that reason.”

*New housing developments could impact historic downtown*

The mix of new development and historic properties will remain steady and continue to be attractive to Columbia’s residents, Gardner said.

“It’s just the character of the town,” Gardner said. “You want to maintain the character and the feel of the city and there are reasons for that and reasons to lure people downtown for shopping. The historic feel of Columbia, the downtown part, is an important element.”

With new complexes, Columbia will have to look into how to fix the resource and infrastructure problem, Gardner said.

“I think we’ll have to start looking into solar power,” Gardner said. “A lot of these buildings are tall enough they could capture quite a bit of our sun and use that to put back into the electric grid. (Net-zero) basically means you’re bringing in as much electricity from the sun as you are using. That’s kind of a goal for a lot of cities is to have a net-zero situation.”

Gardner said solar power will be especially effective for these new buildings.

“Columbia is starting to move towards pushing for that a little bit more,” Gardner said. “If a building were able to capture enough sunlight, they might be able to power the entire building with it. That’s something that’s not being used at all, and that’s optimal.”

Students might need off-campus housing because of the lack of on-campus housing for returning students, George said.

“I don’t want to say they have to (live off-campus), but just being realistic, Residential Life cannot house 30,000 students, and so there’s a limited amount of space that Residential Life does have open for returning students.” George said.

Johnson said students do feel the need to be responsible and live on their own.

“While there are always more students coming to MU every year, (fewer and fewer) students are wanting to live on campus after their freshman year,” Johnson said. “It's important for Columbia to provide living for these students because, it not only helps young adults start living on their own, but it also brings in a lot of revenue for the city.”

Living in the residence halls on campus have more rules than living on your own, Jager said.
“For me, I wanted to get off campus because I wanted to experience really living on my own freedom to come and go as I please,” Jager said. “I don’t have to worry about what I’m allowed to have in my apartment.”

With rising costs of living and higher rent in Columbia, the cost of rent is a concern for nonstudent residents as well, Zenner said.

“We have a housing affordability task force, we have reports that have appeared about that,” Zenner said. “We are looking at engaging different service entities and providers such as the Columbia Housing Authority as it relates to helping provide affordable housing or affordable housing options for the community.”

The city is trying to creatively create more rentable space within city limits and affordable rent because Columbia is expanding, Zenner said.

“That could open up an opportunity that instead of living in a duplex, a student could live in a sensory building on the back of someone else’s property, something like a granny flat or an apartment garage on a regular basis in the future,” Zenner said. “Those are some of the ideas of how you create affordability or create diversity with your housing mixture that we’re looking in at this point.”

Though many more luxury student complexes are popping up within Columbia, they may not be what most students want, George said.

“... All the students I’ve met with are looking for housing options under $500,” George said. “That says something because most of these luxury apartments are offering rent and services above $500.”
Missouri Gov. Jay Nixon shifts left politically

ANALYSIS

November 17
BY DAVID A. LIEB
The Associated Press

JEFFERSON CITY — Missourians, meet your new governor: Jay Nixon, a Democrat.

Though he has long worn the Democratic label, Nixon could have easily passed himself off as a moderate Republican during his first four years as governor. He cut taxes, spending and thousands of government jobs. And Nixon shied far away from President Barack Obama’s signature health care law.

Since he won re-election a year ago, Nixon has shifted noticeably leftward. He sought to expand Missouri’s Medicaid eligibility under Obama’s health care law. He vetoed a big income tax cut and numerous other bills passed by the Republican-led Legislature. And this past week, Nixon came out in support of gay marriage.

“I think he’s rediscovering his Democratic roots in time for whatever it is he chooses to do in 2016,” when voters will next elect a president, said Peverill Squire, a political science professor at the University of Missouri-Columbia.

Because of term limits, Nixon cannot run again for governor. He already has served 16 years as state attorney general and six as a state senator. And he says he has no desire to run for the U.S. Senate.

Nixon’s recent actions seem to confirm that he’s not thinking about another Missouri campaign, or at least not trying to position himself for one.

“I think his shift – in particular on gay marriage, which really flies in the face of popular opinion in Missouri – is a real clear signal … that he’s not considering any sort of statewide run,” said George Connor, head of the political science department at Missouri State University.
Connor added: “It seems to me that he’s positioning himself for a broader audience – he is moving significantly to the left.”

Over the past decade, Missouri voters have rejected gay marriage and twice rebuffed key parts of Obama’s health care law. Yet support for a federal health care overhaul and gay marriage almost appear as a prerequisite for Democrats wanting to step onto the national political stage in the future.

Vice President Joe Biden and former Secretary of State Hillary Clinton – the most well-known of the potential 2016 Democratic president candidates – both have announced their support for gay marriage. So has Obama.

Nixon convened a Capitol news conference last week to announce that he was directing the Missouri Department of Revenue to accept joint income tax returns filed by same-sex couples who get legally married in other states.

He noted that Missouri still has a constitutional amendment prohibiting gay marriage. But Nixon said he no longer supports that and hopes voters get a chance to repeal it. The pronouncement was significant, because Nixon shied away from any discussion of gay marriage during his re-election campaign.

“Many Missourians, including myself, are thinking about these issues of equality in new ways and reflecting on what constitutes discrimination,” Nixon said. “For me, that process has led to the belief that we shouldn’t treat folks differently just because of who they are.”

Nixon added: “I think if folks want to get married, they should be able to get married.”

The new Nixon is a politician who could be accepted by national Democrats yet could still boast of his conservative fiscal management of the state’s budget, Squire said.

“He somebody who wouldn’t offend liberals but could play up his moderate credentials,” Squire said.

Nixon’s evolving positions have been accompanied by an expanded travel itinerary. In September, Nixon went to New York to participate in a panel discussion about natural disasters that was hosted by the Clinton Global Initiative. In October, he went to Chicago for what was billed as a bipartisan governor’s forum on leadership in crisis.

**Connor and Squire both discount a potential Nixon presidential campaign.** But they say he may want to be considered for vice president, a top Cabinet spot such as attorney general or some other position in a future Democratic administration.

Nixon has not publicly discussed what he wants to do after his term as governor ends.

It’s possible that Nixon could simply retire from government and politics. He will be a month shy of age 61 when his term ends in January 2017. That’s plenty young enough for a continued career in politics. And that could help explain Nixon’s new tone.
“I think he wants to elevate his position within the party nationally,” Squire said.

Read more here: http://www.kansascity.com/2013/11/17/4628938/missouri-gov-jay-nixon-shifts.html#storylink=cpy
MU Beethoven concert focuses on the soul and strength genius

By Amy Wilder

Sunday, November 17, 2013 at 2:00 am

In the early 19th century, writers, artists and philosophers of the Western world were rebelling against Enlightenment philosophies and the Industrial Revolution. Elevating the idea of artistic genius — and often considered eccentric — these Romantic idealists prized originality and personal, emotional expression in the arts — particularly horrifying, sublime and awe-inducing emotion. One of these rebellious souls was so successful in his ability to provoke powerful emotional responses through his music that his work is still directly appealing to audiences more than 200 years later.

Few in the contemporary Western world are unfamiliar with the name Ludwig van Beethoven, with the stories of his eccentric character, encroaching deafness and personal hardships — or at the very least, with his musical themes. His creations have become an intrinsic part of the tapestry of our culture, and the University of Missouri's School of Music will present two of his works in a concert at Jesse Auditorium on Thursday, "The Beauty and Brawn of Beethoven."

HUMBLE BEGINNINGS

The pieces to be presented are his 1807 Mass in C major and the 1808 composition Fantasy in C minor for piano, chorus and orchestra. Both are somewhat lesser-known creations and are compared to, or overshadowed by, works composed during the next two decades — the Mass by the later "Missa Solemnis," and the fantasy by the beloved Ninth Symphony, with which it shares, and seems to foreshadow, musical themes.

These earlier compositions were performed in a December 1808 benefit concert that also included the Fifth and Sixth symphonies; the fantasy had been hastily composed by Beethoven that same month as a dramatic concert closer. He played its opening piano solo himself at this concert 205 years ago, improvising variations on the themes. This first performance was not without error — the entire thing had to be restarted at one point when it went off the rails. The Mass didn't, apparently, have the same fate, though the Hungarian prince who commissioned it disliked it, provoking the ire and humiliation of its creator.
Robert Shay, director of the School of Music, is somewhat more appreciative of the Mass than Beethoven's financial benefactor. It's "a piece I got to sing myself when I was a graduate student at the New England Conservatory of Music, so it's something I'm looking forward to hearing again," he said. "... It's less frequently performed than ... the 'Missa Solemnis,' which is a very famous one, but in some ways, it's a much more accessible and enjoyable work, I think."

Shay eagerly noted that the choral makeup for this concert includes the voices of two faculty soloists who have joined the school this semester, Mark McCrory and Steven Tharp, "still very much in the peak of their performance careers ... singing around the country, in some cases around the world."

In addition to MU students and faculty members, many of the performers in the Choral Union are community members who have joined the ensemble. The increased numbers of performers involved across the various ensembles make more ambitious selections possible.

AGAINST ALL ODDS

The choral ensembles are joined by the orchestra and by pianist and MU associate Professor Peter Miyamoto, who will be performing the solo the composer performed originally for the fantasy, and who can trace the lineage of his musical education through five generations to Beethoven himself.

"I look at this as fascinating," Miyamoto said of the piece. "It definitely comes from his middle period, which was all about the struggle and triumph in overcoming struggle. ... A lot of musicians have a problem with the fantasy. They find it maybe a little sprawling, but ... I hear snippets of things like the 'Emperor' Concerto, heroic things. One, of course, sees reference to the fact that it uses the main melody, which is varied throughout ... that is very close to the Ninth Symphony melody. The opening where the orchestra comes in, for me, is straight out of the only opera that he wrote, 'Fidelio.' "

The fantasy opens with a lengthy piano solo; the pianist is joined by the orchestra, and finally, the chorus. The psychological impact of the key change from C minor to C major and the changing texture of sound contribute to the final triumphant climax.

"There are so many forces on stage. ... I think it's an effective move on Beethoven's part. The key scheme and the opening is so dark and full of musical tension that you can just see Beethoven walking against the wind — and it opens up into this big 'hallelujah' moment when the choir comes in," Miyamoto said. "I think it's one of the most typical pieces in this period. ... For him, it was all about overcoming the difficulties."

FEEDING THE SOUL

Paul Crabb, director of choral activities at MU, will be conducting the concert and is confident that it will be significantly more successful than the difficult initial performance by Beethoven. "One always wants more time to rehearse," he said. "That's kind of the nature of the business." The performers, who have had somewhat more time to prepare than did Beethoven, are, by all
accounts, in good shape for the concert — and on the themes and intent of the composer are very much on their minds.

"This is significant — and I've told the choir this — for a lot of reasons, but specifically because this is one of the first times that he chooses this text that says we're basically here to promote an art that will make humanity better," Crabb said. "He became a sort of spokesperson … to say that in art and music, we have a responsibility to make it the best we can so people will become better human beings, and the world will become more united."

Beethoven might have been very much at home in the world today, with his human-centered philosophy and distaste for class divisions — and also with his rebellions against social and musical conventions of the day. In spite of his personal, physical and financial struggles, "he wanted everything to be really spectacular" in his music, Crabb said.

"He wanted everything to be really dramatic and intense, and he felt the emotion of the music was more important in some instances than correctness. He wanted to make sure people felt something in their souls."
Top Drawer

HIGHLIGHTING THE NEW AND NOTEWORTHY

University of Missouri Health Care has been named one of only two health systems in Missouri to be awarded HIMSS Analytics’ Stage 7 designation for advanced electronic medical records in outpatient clinics. The award is a milestone in MU Health’s transition from paper to electronic patient records in 44 outpatient clinics. According to HIMSS Analytics, only 1.16 percent of more than 19,000 clinics throughout the United States have reached Stage 7 of the organization’s Electronic Medical Record Adoption Model, the most advanced level of electronic medical records.